



Tri-County Rural Job Skills Training & Business Education Network



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San Juan County Economic
Development Council (lead)

Economic Development
Association of Skagit County

Island County Economic
Development Council

Summary

The Tri-County Rural Job Skills Training & Business Education Network was created by three counties – Island County, San Juan County and Skagit County – in order to address the growing need for business and job-skills training in their geographic area.



The job skills training component of this tri-county project will help workers garner high-wage jobs in the area, in marine trades and manufacturing management.

The Network will significantly expand and improve the existing business/job skills educational programming currently in place in this tri-county area, leveraging local resources. It will dovetail with existing economic development activities in the area.

Specifically, the program will improve existing business education classes offered by the three economic development agencies in Island, San Juan and Skagit counties; will launch a program of low-cost streamed educational resources for businesses and workers; and will create specialized job skills training programs to help workers garner high-wage jobs in the area.

Initiative Goals

Our goals for this initiative are three-fold:

- Enable small and emerging private employers to streamline and improve their businesses in order to run successfully and create jobs, through the improvement and expansion of existing business education programming;
- Expand the reach of programming by the creation of webinars offered to businesses and workers throughout the area at no charge;
- Launch specific job skills training programs to enable

workers to garner high-wage jobs in the tri-county area, helping these workers leverage out of low-wage, unadvanceable employment.

Scope of Work

Description of the Project: The Tri-County Rural Job Skills Training & Business Education Network will create a program to improve existing business education classes offered by the three economic development agencies in Island, San Juan and Skagit counties; will launch a program of low-cost streamed educational resources for businesses and workers; and will create specialized job skills training programs to help workers garner high-wage jobs in the area.

Details of Activities:

- Launch a program for Association for Operations Management (APICS) training in supply chain management, strategic management, operations and planning, and certification in CPIM;
 1. Certification in production and inventory management (CPIM)
 2. Courses, exams, certification, course materials and textbooks
- Launch a program for marine tech training and certification through the Northwest Center of Excellence for Marine Manufacturing & Technology, Skagit Valley College, including an internship program through local shipyards;
 1. Micro-certification in composites and marine propulsion systems
 2. Courses, exams, certification, course materials and textbooks
 3. Internship program with local shipyards to be implemented immediately after workers' matriculation from the program

- Expand and improve existing business planning, financing and marketing classes and one-on-one support currently offered by three economic development offices;
 1. Example course offerings from 2011:
 1. Planning & Financing a Business
 2. Lenders' Forum for Businesses
 3. Energy Retrofitting for Contractors
 4. Marketing on a Shoestring
 5. Social Media Marketing
 6. Marketing in a New Economy
 7. Facebook for Business
 8. QuickBooks for Business
 9. Reading Financial Statements

- Creation of streamed webinars, hosted by EDASC and taught by course instructors from all three counties, including web streaming services and website updates to support webinars.
- Expansion of technical assistance offered to small and emerging businesses in the tri-county area.
- Will support the continuation of the Business Resource Center in Friday Harbor through the San Juan County Economic Development Element.

Timeframes/Duration: Project will start in June, 2012 and end December, 2012. Project can be implemented immediately after grant approval.

Project Cost: The total cost of the project is \$159,990. Of that amount, we have secured \$ 110,760 from existing funding and we would appreciate a grant for 31%, or the amount of \$49,230 from USDA Rural Business Enterprise grant funds. We have secured the remaining funds from: local governments (e.g., San Juan County education program and ADO support grant, Town of Friday Harbor ADO staff



Expansion of business planning, financing and marketing classes will enable emerging and small businesses to improve and expand, creating new jobs.

support and Business Resource Center grant), SBDC funding, the Department of Commerce (through ADO project support funding), through local community foundations and our own membership (please see bank statements for more information).

Narrative

Need & Benefits: The tri-county area of Island, San Juan and Skagit Counties, like most regions of our



*Forecast growth for composite systems technicians is expected to be nearly 200%, according to the Northwest Center of Excellence for Marine Manufacturing & Technology**

* http://www.marinecenterofexcellence.com/files.asp_Q_pagenummer_E_1958, accessed 1/12/11

nation, has been hit hard by the economic downturn and recession. Our areas have been plagued by losses in our top employment sectors, particularly in manufacturing and construction.

We must create new high-wage jobs to replace these losses, or face decades of lingering unemployment, reduced start-up activity, job stagnation and loss of high-skilled workers to other parts of the U.S.

The benefits of this project address our top economic and employment problems in one broadly scoped program. By offering business planning, financing and marketing classes to emerging and struggling businesses, this project will help businesses and workers better compete in this economy and keep jobs in our rural area.

Area to be Served: The area to benefit from this project will be the tri-county area of Island, San Juan and Skagit counties, including the towns therein.

Coordination: The project will expand existing programs within Island, San Juan and Skagit counties' economic development offices, and will leverage other community programs, coordinating with Workforce Development offices, Skagit Valley College, the Northwest Marine Center of Excellence, San Juan Island Community Foundation, Orcas Island Community Foundation and other entities.

Experience: The three applying agencies – the San Juan County Economic Development Council, the Island County Economic Development Council and the Economic Development Association of Skagit County – each have

substantial experience in administering a rural economic development program.

The tri-county network has worked together for over 6 years to provide seamless business and job skills training in the area. Additionally, each agency has successfully administered – individually and cooperatively – many programs with grant funding.

Recent grant administration includes a course for building energy retrofits for unemployed and under-employed builders, spearheaded by the San Juan County Economic Development Council, funded and coordinated through Workforce Development, the San Juan County EDC, San Juan County government,

the Town of Friday Harbor, the Port of Friday Harbor and the Washington State Department of Commerce. This program created and expanded 8 sustainable, high-wage jobs for the area.

The Economic Development Association of Skagit County (EDASC) has a long history of providing technical assistance to Skagit, Island and San Juan Counties and has served the area for nearly 40 years. EDASC hosts the region's Small Business Development Center, the Latino Outreach Program and an Economic Gardening program with 3 professional staff providing services. Through these programs the Association reaches nearly 300 clients each year drawing more than 750 participants in workshops.

Open since 1985, the Island County Economic Development Council has served the area for over 25 years. The ICEDC focuses on promoting and assisting business growth. Services and resources are given to new and existing businesses that employ local residents, purchase local products and services.

The San Juan County Economic Development Council (SJC-EDC) was begun in 1964 and incorporated four decades later in order to build an environment that helps business owners create jobs. The SJC-EDC offers nearly a dozen courses for businesses and workers each year, and offer one-on-one counseling to small businesses and entrepreneurs. Through their programs, the SJC-EDC assists nearly 100 clients each year.

Results: Area business owners and workers have already experienced the benefits of the educational programming offered through the tri-county area's economic development offices. The goal of this project is to continue to support the efforts of emerging and small businesses and to help workers gain high-wage jobs and expand programming currently offered. Benchmarking: The goal of this project is to create jobs for, or improve the skills of, at least 174 workers and business owners by the end of 2013, and to serve over 850 business owners and workers through educational workshops.

The tri-county consortium of economic development offices has approached business support services from a holistic approach with efforts supporting both existing and emerging businesses from both a strategic planning and a crisis response perspective.

The small business education programs specifically target existing and emerging businesses throughout the region through a dual focus effort. The program supports emerging and small businesses through comprehensive business planning, financing and marketing workshops held regularly throughout the area. The goal of this program is to assist entrepreneurs in assessing a venture concept allowing them to self-screen feasibility of further development. Participants later engage in one-on-one technical assistance sessions to move forward.

Support through this grant will allow area economic development offices to continue these programs while adding the ability to stream content live on the internet permitting a much wider audience than currently available. The grant specifically will purchase the equipment necessary for streaming programs.

The expansion of technical assistance funded through this grant will allow the tri-county consortium to provide highly effective assistance to emerging and existing businesses throughout the region.

Demographic Data for Tri-County Area:

County	2011 Median Income
Island	\$54,206
San Juan	\$53,196
Skagit	\$55,085
Average	\$54,162
Source: WA St Office of Financial Mgmt	

Location	Unempl Sep-11	Unempl Oct-11	Unempl Nov-11
Washington State Total	8.3	8.4	9.4
Island (Oak Harbor MC)	8.2	8.3	8.9
San Juan	6.7	6.2	7.1
Skagit (Mt Vernon-An MSA)	9.2	8.7	10.2
Source: WA St Employment Security Dept			

Key Staff/Partners

Name	Role
James McCafferty	Consultant for EDASC, and to Island/San Juan counties
To-be-hired	SBDC counselor, meeting the stringent requirements of the Small Business Development Center accreditation program
Northwest Marine Center of Excellence	Providing educational programming for Marine Trades job skills component
APICS	Providing educational programming for CPIM component
Ron Nelson	Island County EDC director
Victoria Compton	San Juan County EDC director, consultant for marketing courses

Contact

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