

Broadband USA Applications Database

Applicant Name: Southeast Tennessee Development District

Project Title: Workforce Internet Access Project

Project Type: Public Computer Center

Executive Summary

The S. E. Tenn. Development District is requesting funds to purchase computer equipment for the Tennessee Local Workforce Area 5 (LWIA-5) Career Center system. These centers served unprecedented numbers of customers during fiscal year 2008 – 2009. The recession and job loss has created an increase in demand for Career Center services which include online job search assistance, online job applications, computer workshops (resume building, basic computer skills, and Microsoft applications), and employer pre-hire online assessments—KeyTrain assessments for the WorkKeys National Career Readiness Certificate.

The Tennessee Career Center at Chattanooga (TCCC) served nearly 45,000 customers during 2008 –2009 and over 16,000 of those served required online services in the computer lab and resource center. Due to the geographic location of the TCCC, northeast Alabama and northwest Georgia residents are also provided internet services as well as multiple counties surrounding Hamilton County where the TCCC is located. The Tennessee Career Center at Athens (TCCA), provided services to 28,386 customers and during the same period provided 10,439 customers with internet and/or assessment services. These figures do not include other centers in Marion and Rhea Counties that provide service to rural areas.

There is expected to be an ever-growing request from regional business and industry for online KeyTrain assessments at the Tennessee Career Centers. KeyTrain provides the baseline scores for Applied Math, Locating Information, and Reading Comprehension

The idea of Career Readiness Certificates (CRC) has become popular nationwide as a system for certifying the basic skills necessary for success in typical jobs. A Certificate gives specific information about a person's ability to perform common tasks that all employers require. Over 35 states have or are implementing or are in the process of implementing programs affiliated with ACT's National Career Readiness Certificate (NCRC) or at least using the same model based on ACT's WorkKeys® assessments.

.By earning a National Career Readiness Certificate, individuals can demonstrate that they possess key foundational job skills that are needed for virtually every job. This gives the job seeker an advantage when applying for jobs, a complement to a diploma and resume. For employees already on the job, a certificate can demonstrate skills needed for a promotion or for training that leads to greater productivity and effectiveness.

Statewide Career Readiness Certificates:

The NCRC (or WorkKeys-based) certificate model currently is in operation in states across the nation including Alabama, Alaska, Indiana, Kansas, Kentucky, Louisiana, Michigan, Missouri, New Jersey, New Mexico, North Carolina, Oklahoma, South Carolina, Tennessee Virginia, West Virginia . These states have affiliated with the National Career Readiness Certificate System. The certificate acts as a portable credential that is recognizable by businesses across the country. It can also help economic developers by highlighting residents' skills in each region.