Broadband USA Applications Database

Applicant Name: SAC & FOX TRIBE OF THE MISSISSIPPI IN IOWA

Project Title: Red Earth Public Computer Center

Project Type: Public Computer Center

_______________________ Executive Summary _______________________

Executive Summary The Red Earth Public Computer Center project will have a profound and lasting impact on the lack of broadband capacity in a community of over 7,000 seriously underserved students and adults needing greater access to computer-based learning, internet, and other communication technologies, by creating an open-access computer center which will serve an entire Native American community and many other vulnerable populations. Problem Statement: Our project will address the problem that the Meskwaki Settlement and the towns in South Tama County, Iowa, have very limited public access to computer technology. Residents of this area face a current unemployment rate of over 9% and severely limited access to on-line job search resources, job training, and the skills necessary for job readiness and success. Program Solution: Embodied in the Red Earth Public Computer Center project is creation of a 10,900 sq. ft. public computer center with extended hours of service, 60 computers available to the public, and computer-based instructional services in computer literacy/digital literacy, GED preparation and counseling, ESL training, Meskwaki language training, internet use as a learning tool, post-secondary educational courses offered by Iowa universities, community colleges, and web-connected universities around the country, a variety of career counseling and employment assistance, and career development training and education. We expect to address the computer access needs of over 1,800 persons on an annual basis; many will access the center and its services several times during the year for individualized learning, professional upgrade training, language training, and other services, with a total use number of person-hours logged in a given year of Center operation, totaling well over 50,000 per year. Project Services: The Red Earth Center services will: "Train both youth and adults in the Meskwaki language " Provide computer access to the general public at 30 computer stations for homework, research, and other learning related use, as well as internet access for e-mail and other communication " Computer business-related internet access for e-mail services, research, sales development, staff recruitment, business plan writing, financial plan development " Assess and train in Digital Literacy skills per the standards outlined in Iowa"s Public Computing Center proposal " Create an opportunity for residents of South Tama County to connect to job search resources and services via the internet " Contribute to the support network that already exists in the area by offering connection to other job search/employment resources and services in our economic region, enhance existing resources and services through community collaboration, establish a working relationship with the Iowa Workforce Development Center in Marshalltown, Iowa, " Expand the GED preparation and counseling program through Iowa Valley Community College District " Instruct in English as a Second Language for members of the Hispanic population and others " Conduct post-secondary coursework in a classroom with 30 computers and other instructional technologies appropriate for web-based, on-line courses
from community colleges, colleges, universities, and training institutes across the country, as well as
direct/live delivery of instruction and training " Offer, in coordination with program/business managers,
professional upgrade for Tribal businesses and organizations " Offer professional upgrade training for
the staff of businesses throughout the South Tama County area. Population of the area to be served:
Our project will serve the more than 7,000 people who live in South Tama County, which encompasses
the Meskwaki Settlement of 1,500 persons, a large and growing Hispanic population of 5% of the area
total, and a combination of rural and small town communities. Our project will give serious focus to
serving many vulnerable populations: Native American/Alaska Native, Hispanics, persons with
disabilities, low income, unemployed/underemployed, seniors, and youth. Specifically, our outreach
and promotion of collaborations will emphasize vulnerable populations and the organizations identifying and
advocating for those groups. Estimated number of users: The Red Earth Public Computer Center, which
will be open and provide public access for 75 hours per week, will have at least 1,800 individual users
enter its doors on an annual basis, or about 26% of the South Tama County population. Convenient
access via 4-lane highway and central location to area population centers encourages us to estimate a
high level of person-hour use for the Center. We also estimate that person-hour use of the Center on an
annual basis will follow this pattern: on average, 25% of the 60 computers available at the Center for
general public use and classroom-based education and training will be in use during any given hour of a
75-hour per week schedule of 52 operating weeks per year. That is, 15 computers will yield a total of
1,125 person-hours of use per week, and a total of 58,500 person-hours of use per year. Organizational
experience: The Sac and Fox Tribe of the Mississippi in Iowa has program management and grants and
contracts management experience highly suitable to administration of federal assistance for this project.
Our experience includes successfully overseeing recent facility construction projects for a $27M
Meskwaki High School project and a $10M Meskwaki Elementary School (both with financial assistance
from the Bureau of Indian Affairs) and a $9M Meskwaki Health Center (with financial assistance from
the Department of Health and Human Services). The Tribe has consistently earned exemplary financial
audit reports with no material deficiencies, issued by a nationally-known auditing firm. The Tribe has in
place an experienced, highly-qualified, and dedicated staff in fiscal management, information
technology, education, and computer technology to administer federal funds, oversee PCC, and conduct
successful outreach and collaboration with related broadband, technology, and education-training
service providers in the region. Jobs to be created: Using the Council of Economic Advisors” estimating
methodology, we base our project”s job creation on a total project budget of $3,800,000. For every
$92,000 of project expenditure, one job-year will be created. At that rate, 10.87 job-years will be
created for each $1M of project expenditure; and for a $3.8M budget, 41.05 job-years will be created,
among direct, indirect, and infused job-years. Project cost breakdown: The Red Earth Center has been
enthusiastically endorsed by the Sac and Fox Tribal Council, which has committed in-kind land,
infrastructure, and partial staffing to the project, and has approved successful efforts to collaborate with
the Iowa community college consortium in its application to be the broadband service provider (in
conjunction with the Iowa Communications Network fiber-optics service agency). Our application has a
total budget of $3,800,000, made up of the following: facility construction, 10,900 sq. ft. at $275 per sq.
ft = $2,997,500; site work at $18,000; project inspection at $27,000; office and computer center storage
equipment at $218,000; miscellaneous, including software, IT equipment not included in CCI application
submitted under separate with collaborating community college consortium at $60,000; Red Earth PPC staffing at $250,000; and indirect cost at $229,500 (6.4% IDC rate).