Applicant Name: SOUTHERN AROOSTOOK COOPERATIVE BOARD OF EDUCATION

Project Title: Region Two School of Applied Technology BTOP PCC Grant

Project Type: Public Computer Center

_______________________ Executive Summary_______________________

The changing face of Maine's economy has left many residents in our communities without jobs & without the training, education, or skills necessary to compete in the 21st century job market. With an average unemployment rate of over 9%, our communities are greatly in need of programs & services that will enable our residents to become highly skilled & qualified for work in Maine's high-growth industries & industries with labor shortages. In particular, the 2009 closing of Brunswick Naval Air Station, Maine's 2nd largest employer, has dealt a catastrophic blow to the economy of the Midcoast region & to the financial stability of the state as a whole. The Brunswick Labor Market Area has experienced the greatest percentage of direct loss of base-related jobs, including the elimination of thousands of permanent positions in the area. The effect of this base closing is not limited, however, to the adjacent communities. NASB's closure has resulted in the relocation of approximately 2,700 active-duty military positions & the loss or relocation of roughly 700 civilian jobs. While the nation's recent economic decline has been felt across the state, many of our communities are particularly vulnerable to the downturn. Maine's traditional industries have been in a sharp period of decline for the last two decades & workers in these industries continue to face layoffs & furloughs. Because these declining industries have traditionally required relatively low skills, workers in these regions are not equipped to transition into other areas of employment. Unless an avenue for remediation can be provided, displaced workers will continue to lack the training & education that would enable them to compete for today's high-paying & in-demand jobs. OVERALL APPROACH The provision of distance learning equipment (personal computers & videoconferencing equipment) connected over broadband technologies will open new avenues of learning for residents throughout the state. The goal of this project is to provide expanded educational opportunities for community members, with particular emphasis on displaced workers. Individual PC workstations will allow project sites to expand their web-based learning programs. These will increase the availability of courses & opportunities for individual learning. Each site will also receive a videoconferencing unit. These will not only broaden the scope of current programs at the Ctrs, but also allow the regional vo-techs & adult education Ctrs to connect to one another to share courses & programs. Training courses at one Ctr can now become available at all locations through interactive video. Additionally, our partnership with the Maine Workforce Investment Boards, the Maine Jobs Council & the Veterans' Employment Committee will provide a direct link for adult learners to the WorkReady program, career counseling services, job placement & a great deal of labor programs & resources. AREAS TO BE SERVED Aroostook & Washington County WIB: total pop. 117,871; avg. MHI $27,028; avg. unemployment rate: 10.5%; total # of potential end users: 120 Augusta Adult Ed Ctr: pop.18,560; median household income (MHI) $29,921; unemployment rate 8.2%; # of potential users
175. Bath Reg. Voc. Ctr: Bath: pop. 8,885; MHI $36,372; unemployment rate 6.5%; # of potential users 400 Biddeford Adult Education Center: Biddeford: pop. 21,435; MHI $34,976 unemployment rate 8.4%; number of potential users 150 Biddeford Regional Technology Center: Biddeford: pop. 21,435; MHI $34,976 unemployment rate 8.4%; number of potential users 750 Caribou Regional Technology: pop. 8312; MHI $29,485; unemployment rate 8.8%; # of potential end users 340 CCLC (Whiting): pop 430; MHI $28,304; unemployment rate 8.4%; # of potential users 2665 Central/Western Maine WIB: Lewiston, MGI $37,885, unemployment rate 4.6%, # of potential users: 400. Foster Tech. Ctr: Farmington: pop. 7,545; MHI $26,814; unemployment rate 8.4%; # of potential users 650 Lake Region Voc. Ctr: Naples: pop. 3,659; MHI $38,141; unemployment rate 7.8%; # of potential users 300 Lewiston Regional Technology Ctr: pop. 35,690; MHI $29,191; unemployment rate 9.3%; # of potential end users 1200 Hancock County Technology Ctr (Ellsworth) pop. 6456; MHI $35,938; unemployment rate 12.4%, # of potential end users 220 Houlton/Hodgdon RSU 29/70 Adult Education Ctr: pop. 6476, MHI $26,212; unemployment rate 8.8%; # of potential end users 400 Machias Adult & Community Education Ctr: pop. 2353; MHI $24,318, unemployment rate 12.6%; # of potential end users 150 Maine Indian Education (Perry): pop. 640, MHI $22,500; unemployment 13.6%; # of potential end users 39 Maine Jobs Council (Augusta): pop. 18,560; MHI $29,921; unemployment rate 8.2% # of potential end users 200 Maine Vocational Region 10: Brunswick: pop. 21,720; MHI $36,372; unemployment rate 6.9%; # of potential users 500 Merrymeeting Adult Ed (Topsham): pop 6271; MHI 45,634; unemployment rate 6.8%; # of potential end users 175 MSAD 24, Adult & Community Education: Van Buren: pop. 3,479; MHI $20,038; unemployment rate 8.6%; # of potential users 300 Northern Penobscot Tech Ctr Region III: Lincoln: pop. 5,258; $30,823; unemployment rate 11.5%; # of potential users 500 Pleasant Point Adult Ed. (Passamaquoddy Tribe): pop 640; MHI $16,956; unemployment rate 50%; # of potential users 30 Peter Dana Point Adult Education Ctr: Pop. 432; number of potential users: 32. Portland Arts & Technology High School: Portland: pop. 62,986; MHI $42,830; unemployment rate 6.8%; # of potential users 950 Portland Career Ctr (Coastal Counties LWIB): pop. 64,249; MHI 48,763; unemployment rate 7.9%; total # of potential end users: 150 Presque Isle Technology Ctr: pop 9511; MHI $29,325; unemployment rate: 10.2%; # of potential end users: 70 Region 2 School of Applied Technology: Houlton: pop. 6,144; MHI $26,212; unemployment rate 11.1%; # of potential users: 200 Region # 4 (United Technologies Ctr): Bangor: pop. 31,765; MHI $29,740; unemployment rate 7.8%; # of potential users 1,900 Region 7 (Waldo Co. Tech. Ctr): Waldo: pop. 1,151; MHI $29,063; unemployment rate 7.4%; # of potential users 400 Region 8 (Mid-Coast): Rockland: pop. 7,436; MHI $30,209; unemployment rate 8.5%; # of potential users 80 Region 9 School of Applied Technology: Mexico: pop. 2,866; MHI $27,406; unemployment rate 18.1%; # of potential users 800 Region 11 Oxford Hills Tech; Norway: pop. 4611; MHI $28,497; unemployment rate 12.9%; # of potential end users: 900 RSU #24 Adult Education Ctr: pop. 6456; MHI $35,938; unemployment rate 12.4%, # of potential end users 400 Sanford Regional Vocational Ctr: Sanford: pop. 21,156; MHI $34,668; unemployment rate 10.9%; # of potential users 1,900 Skowhegan Regional Vocational Ctr: Skowhegan: pop. 8,679; MHI $28,304; unemployment rate 9.4%; # of potential users 450 South Portland Adult Education Ctr: pop 23,324; MHI $42,770; unemployment rate 7.6%; # of potential end users 200 St. Croix Regional Technology Ctr: pop. 3447; MHI 24,623; unemployment rate 14.5%; # of potential end users 235 St. John Valley Technology Ctr: Frenchville: pop. 1,189; MHI$33,214; unemployment rate 8.8%; # of potential users 250 Tri-County Technical Ctr (Dexter) pop. 3890; MHI $26,000; unemployment rate 9%; # of potential end users 350 Tri-County WIB: total pop. 213,945; avg.
QUALIFICATIONS
Region 2 has participated in multiple grant programs in the past. While none provide overlap for this proposed project, they have required fiscal oversight & the strict management of federal funds. Region 2 has experience in implementing equipment grants, not only in purchasing & installing new equipment, but also in integrating it into the teaching & learning environment. A project director will be hired to ensure there will be an appropriate level of administrative support to carry out a comprehensive grant program such as this.

JOBS TO BE SAVED OR CREATED
Although the purpose of this project is not to create a specific # of new jobs, it's targeted to train & retrain workers to fill recession proof jobs particularly in those industries experiencing a shortage of skilled workers. New training programs brought about through this PCC grant will target adult residents throughout the state, particularly low-income, unemployed & low-skilled workers. Training programs will be focused on positions in high growth fields such as healthcare, tourism, technology, energy & education. A total of 17,501 potential end users will be targeted for training/retraining leading to recession proof, affordable wage jobs. Overall cost of the project: $3,386,274