



# Diversity Works

Office of University Partnerships

Minority-Serving Institutions Developing Partnerships, Building Communities

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## Historical Preservation — The Business of Saving Cultural Resources

The term “historic preservation” used to be linked almost exclusively with the restoration of old buildings. Not anymore. The term is now applied to the protection and preservation of all of America’s cultural resources—those neighborhoods, communities, cultures, sites, structures, or districts that reflect elements of local or national cultural, social, economic, political, archaeological, or architectural history. Historic preservation ensures that these resources are available to future generations for civic enjoyment and educational activities. In 1966, the U.S. Congress affirmed the need to protect the nation’s irreplaceable resources and established the National Historic Preservation Act, which today mandates the active use of these resources for public benefit and to preserve our national heritage.

This issue of *Diversity Works* highlights how three Office of University Partnerships grantees are using a target area’s cultural flavor or historical preservation projects to safeguard local heritage and enhance marketability to visitors.

**University of Alaska Fairbanks, Kuskokwim Campus** is using its Alaska Native/Native Hawaiian Institutions Assisting Communities (AN/NHIAC) grant to work with nine regional partners and the Yupiiy Piciryarait Cultural Center to foster business and microenterprise development based on Yup’ik customs and skills. Through small-business training and cultural skills workshops, participants learn that the skills they grew up using, such as picking berries, hunting, and fishing, have both cultural and monetary value to them.

**Columbia Basin College** is using funds from its 2006 Hispanic-Serving Institutions Assisting Communities

## Preserving Yup’ik Eskimo Culture Sparks Entrepreneurship

Tourism and ecotourism are just beginning to take hold in the Yukon Kuskokwim Delta of Alaska, but this burgeoning trade offers new business opportunities for the area’s Yup’ik Eskimo to promote and preserve their heritage. The University of Alaska Fairbanks, Kuskokwim Campus (KuC) is using its HUD Alaskan Native/Native Hawaiian Institutions Assisting Communities (AN/NHIAC) grant to work with native villages and their residents to foster business and microenterprise development based on Yup’ik customs and skills. This includes a focus on native and non-native foods, medicines, games, arts, crafts, dance, toy making, storytelling, and tool making. KuC is also working with entrepreneurs to broaden market opportunities for native products by using the Internet.

### Serving the Kuskokwim Region

Each year, Project: Strong Cultures Build Strong Futures works with 2 or 3 of the 56 native Yup’ik Eskimo villages surrounding Bethel, Alaska, where KuC is located. Currently, Kwigillinok and Toksook Bay villagers, along with Bethel residents, are participating in small business training and cultural skills workshops.

“As with all cultures, things are changing here,” remarks Reyne Athanas, coordinator for the Yupiiy Piciryarait Cultural Center (YPCC) and HUD grant. “We would like to keep the traditional ways vibrant and alive, while encouraging contemporary and visionary growth in each skill area.” By attending the cultural skills workshops, residents can more fully develop the skills that they may have learned growing up in their village. Participants also learn that these skills have value culturally and

(HSIAC) grant to work with the Hispanic Chamber of Commerce and small Latino businesses in Pasco, Washington, to develop marketing strategies to better promote their products and services while preserving the region's small-town charm and protecting its natural beauty. It will also work with the Tri-Cities Visitor and Convention Bureau to market the growing wine industry and cultural diversity of Pasco to attract more tourists.

With funds from its 2006 Historically Black Colleges and Universities (HBCU) program grant, Morgan State University has partially completed the first phase of a multiphase effort toward rehabilitating and renovating a 200-year-old gristmill on Morgan State's campus. Once the process is completed, this grist mill—Baltimore's oldest and last remaining—will become one of Morgan's signature buildings.

monetarily. This is important because many of the Yup'ik people maintain a tradition of subsistence living and depend on the land to survive. Often, jobs in the village are limited, and those that are available are with the village school, health service, or local government. Becoming an entrepreneur creates new financial opportunities and allows residents to build on their rich heritage to improve support for their family.

When the project is launched in a new village, the KuC project team travels to the village and presents workshops for 4 to 5 days for an average of 12 to 15 villagers. The participants then travel to KuC's campus each month to attend two more ongoing and new workshops. KuC works closely with the village councils to provide and recruit program participants. "The villages usually have a population of about 200 people, so the village council knows everyone. They help us find people who would be interested in the program," says Athanas. The council is also consulted when scheduling workshops so as not to interfere with village holidays and major activities. The Association of Village Council Presidents is another valuable program partner. The association pays for participants' travel from the villages to KuC's campus.

### Preserving Native Techniques

"In the village, you learn new skills from watching your auntie or working with an uncle," remarks Athanas. KuC sets up workshops so that native skills are passed on much the same way. Native artisans, craftsmen, and performers conduct small workshops on their cultural expertise using demonstrations and hands-on learning. "The artisans are not trained as teachers and we don't want to overwhelm them, so we generally limit classes to 10 participants," says Athanas. Workshops have been held on such topics as building sleds and blackfish traps, beading, crafting ulu and crooked knives, and making

Quspaks, a traditional parka. Workshop participants are encouraged to use their new skills to build or craft their own items to sell.



Skin sewing with instructor Elizabeth Smith and student Roselyn Hoffman.

Business development classes are offered alongside the skills workshops. These classes cover business basics such as developing a business plan, setting up checking accounts, getting bank loans, and providing customer service. Some of those enrolled in the classes are developing tourism-based businesses focusing on ecotourism, birding, and hospitality, while others are building businesses that serve their community. Business plans have included engine repair, a bath shop, and expanding an existing family-owned retail store.

### Connecting to the World

While launching a new business expands villagers' financial opportunities, the remoteness of the Kuskokwim region makes selling outside the area difficult. "Some artisans take their wares to Anchorage, but this is expensive, with the average plane ticket costing \$500," says Athanas. KuC's developing e-commerce effort hopes to help entrepreneurs reach a

## Columbia Basin College Helps Community Plan for Progress

Once a cluster of small rural towns that attracted nature lovers and those looking to get away from the hustle and bustle of the city, the Tri-Cities region of southeast Washington state has become a thriving metropolitan area. Made up of the three adjoining cities of Kennewick, Pasco, and Richland, the Tri-Cities is the fourth largest “city” in the state of Washington and the 191st largest in the United States. With a population of more than 200,000 residents, the Tri-Cities area is home to multinational companies, institutions of higher education, and more than 150 wineries.

While growth is good, community and business leaders in the Tri-Cities have carefully planned the region’s progress. Wishing to reap the rewards of growth and enjoy all of the opportunities it brings—while preserving the region’s small-town charm and protecting its natural beauty—community and business leaders called upon many local resources to accomplish this. One such resource was Columbia Basin College (CBC).

Located in Pasco, CBC is a Hispanic-serving institution that has more than 6,800 full-time and part-time students. The college offers associate degrees and certificates in a variety of disciplines, including accounting, business administration, computer science, medical laboratory technician, and nursing. In 2005, the Tri-Cities Hispanic Chamber of Commerce, Latino small business owners, community leaders, neighborhood residents, and the Tri-Cities Visitor and Convention Bureau sought CBC’s assistance in marketing the region’s small businesses as well as the greater region. For 6 months, the college conducted community discussions and planning meetings to identify what type of support was needed. Based on these discussions, CBC launched the following initiatives that are being implemented with the help of an Office of University Partnerships (OUP) 2006 Hispanic-Serving Institutions Assisting Communities (HSIAC) grant:

- \* Providing marketing assistance for small Latino businesses.
- \* Expanding the Columbia Business Access Center (CBAC).
- \* Promoting the local wine industry.

### Supporting Local Small Businesses

According to the U.S. Small Business Administration, two-thirds of new businesses survive at least 2 years, but only 44 percent survive at least 4 years. There are

several reasons why a small business fails, one being ineffective marketing and promotion. To help small business owners in the Tri-Cities region, especially Latino owners, promote their businesses, CBC and its partners have provided clients more than 250 hours of consulting services and design work worth between \$35,000 and \$50,000.

“Latino small business owners have benefited by working with professionals to market their businesses at little or no cost to themselves,” says Cruz Gonzalez, CBC interim vice president for diversity and outreach. “For example, for Villa Hermosa Landscaping, a Hispanic woman-owned company, a new identity was created as well as a limited-expense marketing plan and a creative plan for future marketing as the money becomes available. As a result, Villa Hermosa has increased business in high-end areas of the Tri-Cities, generating more dollars per job than in the past. The company has also come to us with two products that we are helping them design and develop.”

“We did something similar for another landscaping business, Landscape Concepts by Barb,” Gonzalez notes. “We also designed a Web site and are completing the marketing plan and image package for Classic Cigars. And for Dolly’s Cupcakes, a business owned by three women, we created an image package, a logo, packaging, cost controls, production help, and a sales presentation for Nordstrom’s department store. All of our clients have reported a growth in sales and contracts for services.”



*Farmworker to farmowner workshop*

### Building a Centralized Community Resource

To further support the efforts of small business owners, the college and its partners are actively involved in

the business programming at the CBAC in downtown Pasco. Constructed with funds from a 2002 HSIAC grant and expanded with a portion of the 2006 HSIAC grant, the CBAC offers a centralized community business development complex and has become a valuable resource for small and prospective entrepreneurs.

At the CBAC, Columbia Basin College instructor Gene Holand develops marketing plans for local small businesses. Holand also provides his students with opportunities to test classroom theory by working with these clients to prepare comprehensive marketing plans. In addition, the Tri-Cities Hispanic Chamber of Commerce offers bilingual business workshops. Located nearby are the Small Business Development Center and Service Corps of Retired Executives.

In 2007, CBC collaborated with the U.S. Department of Agriculture Farm Service Agency and the Northwest Farm Credit Services to create the first “farmworker to farmowner” workshops held at the CBAC. More than 25 individuals participated in the workshops, which will be offered again in 2008.

### Uncorking the Potential of Local Wineries

The Tri-Cities is home to more than 150 wineries within a 60-mile radius. It is perhaps one of the region’s fastest growing industries, bringing jobs and tourists to southeastern Washington. CBC is helping these wineries with their promotion efforts by distributing information about wine industry workshops to the Tri-Cities Industrial Council, the Tri-Cities Visitor and Convention Bureau, and additional wine industry-focused organizations.

To help promote the wineries of the Tri-Cities, CBC worked with Angelo Tavernaro, master sommelier and certified wine educator. Tavernaro has judged numerous wine competitions and a frequent guest on HGTV’s *Spencer Christian’s Wine Cellars* series. He created a wine list of more than 700 wines for the Palace Court Restaurant during his 20 years at Caesars Palace in Las Vegas, Nevada, for which he received the *Wine Spectator’s* Award of Excellence and the Best Award of Excellence.

“In the fall of 2007, Angelo and Donna Campbell, dean of CBC’s Institute for Professional Development, helped with outreach and instruction for wine workshops and tours,” says Gonzalez. “This year, Angelo will teach additional credit courses focusing on the history of wine, major wine varietals, wine pouring and tasting, pairing of wine and food, and legal issues associated with wine service.”

Working with its partners, CBC is helping the local community grow in a way that ensures the success of community businesses, yet preserves the natural resources of the region.

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broader market by using the Internet. Currently, a Web developer is working with KuC to create an interactive platform that will feature products from program participants and allow buyers to contact and purchase cultural goods from the sellers. While the platform is being designed, interested entrepreneurs are learning how to promote their products and businesses by using blogs and MySpace.

Despite the slower than expected start, interest in KuC’s e-commerce program is high. The low cost of using the Web is very appealing for the new micro-entrepreneurs, most of whom have limited or no startup capital. All village residents have free access to the Internet either at village training centers or at village schools open to the community after school hours.

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## Morgan State University Grist Mill

Visit the city of Baltimore, Maryland, and you are sure to hear about Fort McHenry, the place associated with Francis Scott Key's composition of "The Star Spangled Banner." Or you may be encouraged to tour the Edgar Allan Poe house, former residence of the famous author, poet, and critic, or to visit the U.S. Coast Guard Cutter Roger B. Taney, the last surviving warship that was present and fought at the 1941 Japanese attack on Pearl Harbor. These are only a few of the city's many historic buildings and structures. Now Morgan State University (MSU) is taking steps to ensure that the Ivy Mill grist mill—Baltimore's oldest and last remaining grist mill—located on campus, is added to this list. MSU purchased the property on which the grist mill is located in 1917. With assistance from funds received from its U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development's (HUD's) 2006 Historically Black Colleges and Universities (HBCU) program grant, the university has partially completed phase one of a multiphase effort toward rehabilitating and renovating this 200-year-old grist mill.



Ivy Mill Grist Mill

### Preserving History

In its heyday, the Ivy Mill, like other grist mills of the time, was used to grind grain into flour. In the early 1900s, it served as a local schoolhouse. Sometime after being acquired by MSU, it was converted into the campus power plant and was used in this capacity until the early 1950s.

In the early 1990s, as the university experienced growth and development, the Maryland Historic Trust asked MSU to preserve the building, and a campaign was launched to convert it to a visitors' center for the campus and the community. However, it was not until MSU received its HBCU grant in 2006 that the project again gained traction. Unfortunately, unused and

unoccupied for more than 50 years, the 2-1/2-story building had experienced significant structural decline. An assessment of the structure was needed before any plan to renovate could begin. In 2007, MSU retained KCI Construction Management Group to assess the general condition of the mill's structural and architectural elements and determine where repairs were required to stabilize the structure.

KCI observed that the mill needed to be stabilized to prevent further deterioration and recommended measures to address potentially unsafe conditions, including:

- \* Removing all abandoned furniture, equipment, materials, supplies, and the entire wood floor system.
- \* Repairing certain portions of the second-floor framing.
- \* Removing slate shingles from the roof.
- \* Providing new plywood sheathing on the existing repaired or replaced roof joists, and a new asphalt shingle roof system on the new sheathing.
- \* Repairing cracks in the walls.

"The 2006 HUD HBCU grant funded this first phase of the mill's restoration process, which included the building evaluation and stabilization and the preliminary design stage of developing the construction documents," says Ellis Brown, director of community and economic development at MSU.

At this point, the building evaluation is complete, and the Maryland Historic Trust is reviewing various building stabilization recommendations submitted by KCI. After stabilizing the building, an architecture firm will develop the preliminary design and provide MSU with an initial estimate of construction costs. Once the design phase is complete, the completion of construction documents and the actual construction, rehabilitation, and renovation phases will occur.

"One of the most exciting aspects of this project is that the converted visitors' center will be designed and built in line with applying for and receiving Leadership in Energy and Environmental Design (LEED) certification as a green building," says Brown. LEED certification provides independent, third-party verification that a building project meets the highest green building and performance measures. "The final part of the development process will be to landscape the area surrounding the building," says Brown.

*Grist Mill continued on page 6*

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*Grist Mill continued from page 5*

The rehabilitation of the old Ivy Mill opens new possibilities for MSU. The university has just started a new academic program in museum studies and historic preservation. This rehabilitation project will provide opportunities for students to apply their newly acquired academic skills to document the National Park Service Historic American Building Survey or Historic American Engineering Record. The Ivy Mill rehabilitation project will also open opportunities for the rehabilitation of the chapel, for historic tourism, and for the development of historic and interpretive markers.

“Baltimore has more historic districts than any other city in the United States, including Boston and Washington, D.C. One of the city’s goals is to increase the number

and diversity of visitors’ center locations around the city,” says Brown. “This building will serve to describe the history of the surrounding communities, the neighborhoods, and the university.”

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HUD’s Office of University Partnerships (OUP) provides grants to institutions of higher education to assist them and their partners with the implementation of a broad range of community development activities, including neighborhood revitalization, housing, and economic development. This newsletter, *Diversity Works*, highlights the efforts of grantees in OUP’s Historically Black Colleges and Universities, Hispanic-Serving Institutions Assisting Communities, Tribal Colleges and Universities, and Alaska Native/Native Hawaiian Institutions Assisting Communities grant programs and includes a variety of interesting projects, compelling grantee profiles, and other valuable resources for minority-serving institutions.