

Heritage University (HU) proposes to directly impact the economic conditions of Yakima County and its large Hispanic population through a three-pronged approach, with the assistance of a HSIAC grant:

- 1. Certified Customer Service Training (SUPERHOST) for local community businesses**
- 2. Development of an Entrepreneur Center**
- 3. Predatory Lending Workshops**

■ **Customer Service Training** – Heritage University will use its faculty and business students to train local businesses from across Yakima County on tourism knowledge, etiquette and customer service skills. HU will use the nationally recognized *Super Host* model created in 1985 to prepare British Columbia’s tourism workforce to host the world at EXPO ’86. The objective is to provide all local businesses which may interact with tourists in any way with an understanding of excellent customer service. The outcome will be increased sales, increased number of jobs and all-season consistency to local business owners in the many small communities in the region surrounding Heritage University. To date, over 160 local community participants have been trained and certified.

■ **Entrepreneur Center** – This will be a comprehensive university supported center serving the region. The Entrepreneur Center will provide a wide array of services. This will include an information web-based center for existing and start-up businesses looking for business assistance, including a business portal with access to public and private resources and programs. It will make available the research tools needed to successfully start, manage, and effectively run a small business. The outcome of the Center will be more new entrepreneurs who successfully launch and sustain their businesses. In partnership with our local development association, we also assisted in creating an Enterprise Challenge modeled after the University of Washington Entrepreneur Center. This was a multi-round three month business plan competition with CASH prizes of up to \$17,500 that was leveraged through private donations. **The Enterprise Challenge was held from September through December 2010 and is designed to identify and reward innovative business ideas and solid business plans. Top prize was \$10,000, 2nd place \$5,000 and 3rd place \$2,500.**

The Enterprise Challenge is for:

- **Entrepreneurs & new business owners;**
- **Any type of for-profit business or business idea;**
- **New, emerging businesses less than three years old; and**
- **People with ideas for new products or services who want to start a business in Yakima County.**

■ **Predatory Lending Workshops** – A county wide program will be developed to encourage local residents and business owners to attend predatory lending educational workshops. These workshops will be a partnership between Heritage University and the Consumer Credit and Counseling Services (CCCS) of Yakima Valley. Several other entities have committed to serve as community contacts and workshop sponsors such as the Washington Housing Finance Commission, local banks, mortgage lenders, and realtors. They will provide community members first-hand information about avoiding predatory lending practices. The HSIAC Director, Outreach Coordinator and students will be coordinating these efforts with the CCCS. Heritage students have also committed to help disseminate and recruit families and local businesses for these workshops.

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