

# ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT IN RURAL COLLEGES

## Perkins Category 10: Administrative

### New Project

#### Applicant Institution: South Plains College

#### Part A: Project Summary

**Please provide a description of the overall approach or methodology of the project.**

The Texas Higher Education Coordinating Board (THECB) has identified the following 19 community colleges as rural: Angelina, Blinn, Coastal Bend, Cisco Junior, Clarendon, Frank Phillips, Hill, Howard County, Kilgore, Navarro, Northeast Texas, Panola, Paris Junior, Ranger, South Plains, Southwest Texas Junior, Vernon Junior, Western Texas, and Wharton County Junior College. These colleges, through the Rural College Focus Group, have formed the Texas Rural Community College Network (TRCCN) for the purpose of identifying and addressing issues and needs specific to these rural colleges. The TRCCN has been able to collaborate to create solutions for some of the problems facing rural colleges and have established a strong forum and network for professional development.

The Rural College Focus Group produced a strategic plan for rural college engagement that has led to the creation of the TRCCN. The vision statement for the TRCCN is "to be a catalyst for economic development of rural Texas through career and technical programs." For many rural communities across Texas, economic development is equated to "business development." The five EDRC partners recognize that many rural colleges operate with a much broader definition of economic development, but are restricted to their legislative mandate of providing career and technical training. Limited resources restrict the services rural colleges are capable of delivering to sustain economic growth in the communities they are designed to serve. By developing and promoting a broader definition of economic development and a strategic plan that addresses all the important facets of economic development, including expanded access to education and training, the project will provide more opportunities for rural colleges to close the gap between what is and what should be. To this end, the Rural Economic Development project seeks to leverage the resources of the TRCCN and direct its focus to providing rural colleges with the tools to expand and enhance their knowledge, understanding and application of community and economic development strategies.

Since many of the economic development problems that face rural communities are unique to their size and geographic location, a general approach to the challenges and problems for most rural communities will not work. Continued globalization of business and industry requires rural communities to form alliances and partnerships that allow for the development of a unified long-term vision and plan for economic development. Rural community colleges are poised to serve as "change agents" in the development of regional concepts, in diffusing political boundaries, in fostering productive relationships, and in changing community mindsets. With the proper training and focus, rural colleges can lead the way in collaboration and serve as the catalyst to grow regional economies that benefit from new ideas, innovation and training.

To accomplish this approach, South Plains College, Frank Phillips College, Coastal Bend College, Wharton County Junior College and Paris Junior College will work to establish partnerships between the TRCCN and the Office of Rural Community Affairs, the Rural Community College Initiative and the Rural Community College Alliance to sustain and expand

the effectiveness of the Rural College Network. This collaboration will focus on the following goals over the next three years (if funding is available):

1. Expose TRCCN and other Texas rural colleges to the economic and rural community development efforts provided through the Rural Community College Initiative (RCCI) and the Southern Rural Development Center. (Years 1, 2, 3)
2. Collaborate to provide economic development training programs for TRCCN institutions to include such topics as community leadership development, rural entrepreneurship, resource mapping, business skills, e-commerce, business retention and expansion. (Years 2, 3)
3. Plan and present a regional economic development summit as a model for replication in other parts of the state. (Year 3)
4. Seek to promote continued communication, cooperation, collaboration and resource sharing among rural community colleges. Years 1, 2, 3)

Working to capitalize on the unique resources and expertise of each college and each region, the five project partners are coordinating planning, organizing project strategies and activities, developing tools, facilitating activities, and monitoring project participants. All 19 designated rural community colleges will be invited to participate in the project activities and continue the viability of the TRCCN. The TRCCN has developed into a forum for rural public, two-year colleges to identify, discuss and develop collaborative solutions to address the unique needs of the communities and students they serve. More importantly, the TRCCN can address barriers that limit full participation in local, regional, and statewide economic development efforts and restrict their ability to accomplish their missions.

The partners propose the Rural Economic Development project to operate as a multi-year project.

## **Part B: Project Scope**

### **Describe how you will address the goals/objectives established in the RFQ.**

This project will address goals and objectives, 2e, 2f, 2g, 7a, 7b and 8d as established for Perkins State Leadership Grants. The Economic Development in Rural Colleges project will result in: development of a strategic plan model for regional economic development that addresses issues and concerns specific to the 19 TRCCN member colleges and their community partners; an increased depth of collaboration between rural colleges, public schools, universities and business and industry that results in multi-level economic development partnerships; increased participation of TRCCN member colleges in local, regional and statewide economic development initiatives; increased college access to economic development resources available through the Rural Community College Initiative, Rural Community College Alliance, Office of Rural Community Affairs, and Southern Rural Development Center; expansion of the TRCCN website to include economic development tools and resources.

### **Please clearly identify the deliverables of this project that will be used to disseminate the results statewide and provide a brief description of how that should occur.**

A previous Perkins Leadership Grant has created and developed the Texas Rural Community College Network (TRCCN), a consortium of 19 rural Texas community colleges that is recognized by the THECB, Texas Association of Community Colleges (TACC), Texas Community College Teacher's Association (TCCTA) the Texas Association of College Technical

Educators (TACTE), and the Texas Administrators of Continuing Education (TACE). The Economic Development in Rural Colleges (EDRC) project will continue the collaboration of the TRCCN in addressing the strategic vision of the Network and the goals and objectives of the project. The EDRC involves the creation of an Economic Development Focus Group that is composed of 2 representatives from each of the 19 identified rural community colleges, the THECB representative, as well as the project director and the five Partner college representatives.

The initial step of the EDRC will consist of collaboration among the five Partner college representatives in which a survey instrument will be designed to identify the following: 1.) existing economic development efforts of TRCCN members; 2.) level of involvement in established regional economic development partnerships; and 3.) issues and barriers limiting rural colleges involvement in local, regional and statewide economic development initiatives. The EDRC Partners will examine the findings of the Rural College Focus Group and consult with representatives from the Southern Rural Development Center, the Rural Community College Initiative and the Office of Rural Community Affairs to identify resources that may be applicable to survey development.

The survey will be distributed to the presidents and chief workforce development officers of all 19 identified rural colleges, and the results will be compiled and distributed to the entire network of 19 colleges. The results of the survey will be used to identify rural community college strengths, weaknesses, opportunities and threats in regard to rural and community economic development activities and strategies. The survey will also provide data for compilation of a list of successful economic development partnerships and best practices. The EDRC Partners will meet in early November 2004 to analyze the survey findings and prepare for a spring 2005 meeting of the Economic Development Focus Group.

An Economic Development Focus Group meeting is planned for February 2005 at which time the survey results will be distributed and discussed in order to identify common needs in the areas of professional development training, available economic development tools, and best practices/solutions to common issues. Representatives from the Office of Rural Community Affairs, the Rural Community College Initiative and the Southern Rural Development Center will be invited to introduce participants to the economic and rural development efforts of these organizations. Several TRCCN colleges have participated in the RCCI program and will share what they have learned. Other sources of economic development expertise will be identified and any unresolved issues will be targeted for further research by the five Partner colleges or other Network members. Input collected from TRCCN participants at this planning meeting will be drafted into a document to form a strategic plan for the EDRC project.

A second meeting of the EDRC Partners will be planned for April 2005 to finalize the project's strategic plan and to strengthen linkages with RCCI, RCCA, ORCA and SRDC through continued professional development. Results of research of unresolved issues will be presented and expertise and best practices/solutions will be identified. The primary outcome of this meeting will be the final development of the strategic plan and the planning of an economic development training workshop that will be delivered in summer 2005 should additional Perkins funds become available.

Since the focus of the project is to extend the collaborative viability of the TRCCN to address community and rural economic development, expansion of the TRCCN website and listserv are a key deliverable for this project. Available economic development on-line resources will be incorporated as part of the TRCCN web site. The web site will host information regarding project mission, focus group members, survey results, strategic plan, and ongoing activities, workshops and meetings. The listserv will be continued and serve as a medium whereby workforce

development staff, faculty, public school partners, and business and industry partners may share information and solutions to problems and conduct e-focus groups.

Results of the project collaboration will be distributed through outcome reports to the THECB, TACC, TCCTA, TACTE and TACE and through a "lessons learned" section on the TRCCN web site. Rural colleges identified as having exemplary economic development partnerships will be encouraged to present their programs at annual meetings of TACTE and TACE. Research on projects from large colleges will be analyzed for methods to adapt the projects to smaller rural institutions and disseminated through mail, listserv, and the web site.

Formative and summative evaluation will play a role in assessing the a) quality and usefulness of the strategic plan developed by the Partners, b) the amount and depth of collaboration among TRCCN members and c) the level of participation of all principals involved. Qualitative survey data and quantitative data (attendance/participation in leadership group meetings, participation in professional development activities, web site visits, number of list serve exchanges, involvement in RCCI, RCCA and ORCA initiatives, etc.) will be collected, analyzed and incorporated into the year-one report of the project.

To continue this project, a second-year grant for implementation of the strategic plan, development of a regional economic development plan model, continued delivery of identified professional development, and the planning and implementation of one regional economic/community development summit will be necessary.

**Provide a brief budget justification (for example: be specific if funds will be shared with partnering colleges).**

#### BUDGET JUSTIFICATION

**SALARIES and FRINGE BENEFITS:** \$15,508. Salary for Project Director (Richard Walsh) is budgeted for 10% time for 12 months for a total request of \$9,495. Salary for secretarial support (Delma Salinas) is budgeted at 10% time for 12 months at \$11.92/hour for a total request of \$2,441. Fringe benefits are calculated at 10% of actual benefit costs and compute to approximately 30% of salary for Project Director and Secretarial support, for a total of \$3,572.

**TRAVEL:** \$4,698. Funds requested under for travel is shown only for the applicant institution. Other travel requests are under Miscellaneous.

Two, one-day meetings with Partner Colleges for Project Director and one additional SPC representative for project planning purposes @ \$500/person - \$2,000. One, one-day meeting with all 19 TRCCN member colleges for Project Director and two additional SPC representatives for needs survey analysis and strategic plan development @ \$500/person - \$1,500. One SPC representative (Richard Walsh) to attend Rural Community College Alliance Conference, Oct. 3-5, 2004, in Myrtle Beach, SC, for purpose of developing linkages with this organization and surveying possible professional development presentations for TRCCN. Costs are estimated from Lubbock, TX to Myrtle Beach, SC: Registration fees @ \$140; Airfare @ \$431; Hotel for 1 person @ \$99/night (w/13.5% hotel tax) for 3 nights, \$337; rental car for 3.5 days @ \$176; and per diem at \$38/day for one person, \$114.

**CAPITAL OUTLAY (equipment):** \$0. No funds are requested for capital outlay.

**CONSULTANT FEES:** \$9,800. Funds are requested to pay for speakers (to be determined) to present at the one Economic Development Focus Group meeting that includes representatives from all 19 rural colleges. Two presenters at \$2,500 each. A web page designer/content manager (Stephanie Jones) will be paid to expand the Texas Rural Community College Network website to include economic development resources and information - \$3,000. Fees for list

serve management (Panola College) are estimated to be \$150 per month for the 12 months of the grant period - \$1,800.

SUBGRANTS and SUBCONTRACTS: \$0. There are no funds requested for subgrants or subcontracts.

MISCELLANEOUS: \$36,679. Funds for postage and supplies are requested for the 12-month rural economic development planning project period at \$1,000 for South Plains College and \$300 each for Coastal Bend College, Frank Phillips College, Paris Junior College and Wharton County Junior College, for a total of \$2,200. Funds for meeting expenses, including refreshments, handouts, rentals, for two meetings of the Partner Colleges for survey and strategic planning purposes and one meeting of the Economic Development Focus Group are requested at \$500 per meeting - \$1,500. Website domain registration is requested at \$35. Travel for all rural colleges, except applicant college, is calculated for one, 1-day meeting of the Economic Development Focus Group consisting of two representatives from each of the 18 rural colleges, one THECB representative, and four planning representatives from Partner Colleges – total 41 participants @ \$500/person - \$20,500. Travel for Partner Colleges, excluding applicant college, to attend two, 1-day planning meetings, 2 representatives per college (total of 8) @ \$500/person - \$8,000. Travel for one representative from Partner Colleges, CBC, FPC, PJC and WCJC, to attend the Rural Community College Alliance Conference Oct. 3-5, 2004 in Myrtle Beach, SC for the purpose of networking with the Rural Community College Initiative and surveying available resources for rural economic development. Costs estimated from Corpus Christi, TX (CBC), Houston, TX (WCJC), Dallas/Fort Worth (PJC), and Amarillo, TX (FPC) to Myrtle Beach, SC, as follows: Airfare for 4 persons @ \$341 per person, \$1,364; Conference registration for 4 person @ \$140/person, \$560; Car rental for 4 persons for 3.5 days @ \$176/person, \$716; hotel for 4 persons @ \$99/night (w/13.5% hotel tax) for 3 nights, \$1,348; and per diem at \$38/day, 3 days, for 4 persons, \$456.

ADMINISTRATION: \$3,334. Administrative overhead is requested at 5% of total direct project costs.

TOTAL requested for Economic Development in Rural Colleges Planning Grant \$70,019.

### **Part C: Goals, objectives, activities, results and timelines**

**Describe activities, results and timelines for the project under each required goal and objective and any additional goals and objectives as appropriate. Use scientific numbering to outline goals (e.g. 1, 2, 3), objectives (e.g. 1.1, 1.2, 2.1) and activities (e.g. 1.1.1, 1.1.2, 2.1.1). Results and timelines can be identified at the objective and activity levels.**

Goal 1: Develop a collaborative plan by which rural public two-year colleges can be more participatory in local, regional and statewide economic/community development initiatives.

1.1 Assess the economic development training needs of TRCCN partnership schools and identify possible best practices/solutions for implementation or replication at member colleges.

9/1/04 – 1/31/2005

1.1.1. Survey TRCCN colleges to identify existing economic development efforts, level of involvement in established regional economic development partnerships; and issues and barriers limiting rural colleges involvement.

9/1/2004 – 10/31/2004

1.1.2 Report survey results to Economic Development Focus Group, Texas Association of Community Colleges, Texas Higher Education Coordinating Board and Office of Rural Community Affairs.

11/1/2004 – 3/1/2005

1.1.3 Incorporate survey findings into strategic plan and the development of a comprehensive list of established regional economic development partnerships.

1/1/2005 – 8/31/2005

1.2 Key personnel from each institution to serve on an Economic Development Focus Group entrusted with developing a strategic plan.

9/1/2004-8/31/2005

1.3 Develop opportunities for members of the focus group to interact, including collaborative meetings, online discussion groups and list serv activities.

9/1/2004 – 8/31/2005

Goal 2. Develop linkages and expose TRCCN colleges to the economic and rural development efforts provided through the Rural Community College Initiative, the Rural Community College Alliance, the Office of Rural Community Affairs, and the Southern Rural Development Center.

2.1 Engage representatives from these organizations to participate in scheduled meetings of the Economic Development Focus Group.

9/1/2004 – 8/31/2005

2.2 Identify TRCCN member colleges involved Phase 1 and Phase 2 RCCI initiatives to serve as mentor colleges.

9/1/2004 – 8/31/2005

2.3 Focus Group representation at the annual meeting of the Rural Community College Alliance.

9/1/2004 – 10/31/2004

Goal 3: Provide a forum for the sharing of ideas, projects and solutions that have been created within TRCCN colleges and can be adapted to other settings.

3.1 Plan and conduct a meeting of the Economic Development Focus Group and provide professional development opportunity based on survey findings.

9/1/2004 – 3/30/2005

3.2 Identify key representatives from each institution with expertise in the identified problem-areas.

9/1/2004 – 8/31/2005

3.3 Showcase/demonstrate best practices of rural community development and provide networking opportunities for the representatives of rural colleges.

9/1/2004 – 8/31/2005

Goal 4: Expand and maintain the TRCCN's Internet presence by which these colleges can share ideas, projects, and solutions for obstacles and barriers that limit their participation in economic/community development initiatives.

4.1 Maintain and expand the TRCCN list serv to include economic development leadership group members and key economic development partners and serve as a means of communication between partners and collaborators.

9/1/2004 – 8/31/2005

4.2 With input from all TRCCN colleges and the THECB representative, maintain and expand the TRCCN web site to include project initiatives, links to economic development resources and tools, and delivery of professional development information.

9/1/2004 – 8/31/2005

4.3 Monitor and measure the traffic on the TRCCN website and the list serv.

9/1/2004 – 8/31/2005

4.4 Conduct a user's survey to assess effectiveness of web site information for Year 2 of the continuation grant.

6/1/2005 – 8/31/2005

## Part D: Evaluation Plan

**Please describe which data will be used to measure the impact of your project on the student populations and how that data will be enlisted (what should be expected for a "good" result):**

The Economic Development in Rural Colleges project will be evaluated upon accomplishing the following first-year objectives: formation of the economic development leadership group to facilitate the development of a collaborative plan; creation of a strategic plan document; the depth of collaboration among rural public two-year college in the EDRC project; dissemination/communication of information and professional development; and project outcomes. The evaluation plan will be a continuous process as the project conducts its assessment of the economic development training needs of the 19 TRCCN colleges. Presidents of the identified rural community colleges will serve as leaders of change and in forging greater rural community college participation in regional economic development partnerships and initiatives.

The project will be evaluated in terms of the following outcomes/products:

- Publication of an assessment report of the economic development training needs, challenges and barriers of TRCCN colleges.
- Publication of a strategic plan to address the needs, best practices and action plans for future participation in local, regional and statewide economic development initiatives.
- Collaboration with the Rural Community College Initiative, the Office of Rural Community Affairs, and the Southern Rural Development Center to encourage greater understanding and involvement in economic and rural community development efforts.
- Use of group processes to identify model programs, best practices and share the models with all of the rural community colleges within the TRCCN.
- The number of attendees from the 19 rural community colleges to the economic development leadership group meeting (expected to be 80%).
- The number of contacts and traffic to the list serv (expected to increase by 5% each month after inclusion of EDRC project).
- Expansion and maintenance of the Texas Rural Community College Network website to include economic development resources, with a 5% increase in traffic to the site each month subsequent to its expansion.
- Delivery of professional development training that addresses needs of rural colleges and communities (if additional funding is available).

This project will use the following quantitative methods to evaluate the success of the project:

- The number of collaborators in Economic Development in Rural Colleges project
- Increased participation in local and regional economic development partnerships by rural public two-year colleges
- Tracking the number of persons in attendance at meetings and workshops

- Participant satisfaction with professional development training programs
- Monitoring the amount of traffic on the website and the list serv activity

The qualitative methods of evaluation that will be utilized include:

- Publication of an assessment report based on the findings of the needs survey.
- Creation of the strategic plan for future implementation
- Expansion of the TRCCN website and list serv.
- User survey to assess the effectiveness of the website
- Depth of collaboration among rural public two-year colleges and business, industry and education partners
- Use of evaluation forms after presentations, meetings and workshops

#### **Part E: Project Staff**

##### **Dr. Richard Walsh, Provost, Workforce Development**

Representing South Plains College and working with the Partner colleges to: plan and prioritize project goals, objectives and activities; facilitate collaboration to accomplish project goals; communicate and gather information for grant evaluation.

##### **Delma Salinas, Secretary**

Assisting the Project Director with organizing and planning for meetings, workshops, and any travel necessary for the project; providing secretarial support to project activities as needed.

#### **Part F: Coordination/Linkages**

**Please list all participating partners to the proposed project. Include contact address, phone number and e-mail address.**

##### **Coastal Bend College**

Mick Anderson (primary contact), Director of Institutional Advancement, 3800 Charco Road, Beeville, TX 78102 Ph 361-354-2399 mick@coastalbend.edu

John Gratton, Vice President of Instructional Services, 3800 Charco Road, Beeville, TX 78102 Ph 361-354-2275 grattonj@coastalbend.edu

Duwayne Dumas, Vice President of Administrative Services, 3800 Charco Road, Beeville, TX 78102 Ph 361-354-2280 duwayne@coastalbend.edu

Glynis Strause, Coordinator of Continuing Education, 3800 Charco Road, Beeville, TX 78102 Ph 361-354-2260 ghstraus@coastalbend.edu

##### **Frank Phillips College**

Brent Childers (primary contact), Dean of Workforce Development and Technical Programs, P.O. Box 5118, Borger TX, 79008, Ph 806-274-5311 bchilders@fpc.cc.tx.us

Duane Jacobs, Executive Vice President and Dean of Instruction, P.O. Box 5118, Borger, TX 79008, Ph 806-274-5311 djacobs@fpc.cc.tx.us

**Paris Junior College**

David McAnally (primary contact), Dean of Applied Technologies, 2400 Clarksville St., Paris, TX 75460 Ph 903-782-0381 dmcanally@paris.cc.tx.us

Dwight Chaney, Dean of Arts and Sciences, 2400 Clarksville St., Paris, TX 75460 Ph 903-782-0388 dchaney@paris.cc.tx.us

**Wharton County Junior College**

Dale Pinson (primary contact), Dean of Workforce Development, Continuing Education and Distance Learning, 911 Boling Hwy, Wharton, TX 77488, Ph 979-532-6419 dalep@wcjc.edu

**BUDGET****A. Staff Salaries and Benefits**

|  |            |                    |
|--|------------|--------------------|
| Project Director (Richard Walsh)             | 10% time   | \$9,495.00         |
| Secretarial Support (Delma Salinas)          | 10% time   | \$2,441.00         |
| Fringe Benefits                              |            |                    |
| 10% actual for Project Director, Secretarial | \$3,572.00 |                    |
| Total Staff Costs                            |            | <b>\$15,508.00</b> |

**B. Travel (Staff Only/Lead College)**

|  |  |                   |
|--|--|-------------------|
| Project Director & 2 SPC rep; 1 one-day meetings with TRCCN<br>@ \$500/trip/person |  | \$1,500.00        |
| 2 one-day meetings with Partner Colleges for 2 SPC reps<br>@ \$500/trip/person     |  | \$2,000.00        |
| 1 SPC Rep to attend RCCA Conference, Oct. 3-5, 2005                                |  | \$1,198.00        |
| Total Staff Travel Costs   |  | <b>\$4,698.00</b> |

**C. Capital Outlay/Equipment**

Not applicable

**\$0.0**

**D. Consultant Fees**

|  |  |                   |
|--|--|-------------------|
| Speakers (to be determined) for Spring Focus Group Meeting |  | \$5,000.00        |
| Web site design and maintenance (Stephanie Jones)          |  | \$3,000.00        |
| List serv Management (Panola College)                      |  | \$1,800.00        |
| Total Consultant Fees                                      |  | <b>\$9,800.00</b> |

**E. Subgrants and Subcontracts**

Not applicable

**\$0.0**

**F. Miscellaneous**

|   |                    |
|---|--------------------|
| Postage and supplies for SPC  | \$1,000.00         |
| Supplies for FPC, PJC, CBC, WCJC (\$300 each)   | \$1,200.00         |
| Two, 1 day planning Meetings w/4 partner Colleges (2 Reps/inst.)                                      | \$8,000.00         |
| One, 1-day meetings with all 19 Rural CCs (2 Reps/inst. (18 colleges), THECB Rep, & Planning Reps (4) | \$20,500.00        |
| Meeting Costs (refreshments, handouts, etc., 3 @ \$500/meeting  | \$1,500.00         |
| RCCA Conference: Four reps (FPC, PJC, CBC, WCJC)  | \$4,444.00         |
| Website & List serv misc. (domain registration)   | \$35.00            |
| <b>Total Miscellaneous</b>  | <b>\$36,679.00</b> |

### **G. Administration**

|                                    |                   |
|------------------------------------|-------------------|
| Indirect costs (@ 5% direct costs) | <b>\$3,334.00</b> |
|------------------------------------|-------------------|

### **Budget Summary**

|                                    |                   |
|------------------------------------|-------------------|
| 1. Salaries and Fringe Benefits    | \$15,508.00       |
| 2. Travel (Staff Only)             | \$4,698.00        |
| 3. Capital Outlay/Equipment        | \$0.0             |
| 4. Consultant Fees                 | \$9,800.00        |
| 5. Subgrants and Subcontracts      | \$0.0             |
| 6. Miscellaneous                   | \$36,679.00       |
| 7. Subtotal – Direct Costs         | \$66,685.00       |
| 8. Administration (indirect costs) | \$3,344.00        |
| <b>Total</b>                       | <b>\$70,019.0</b> |

Rural Econ Dev Perkins Grant