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PUT YOUR SKILLS TO WORK: AN EMPLOYMENT TRAINING PROGRAM FOR LOW-INCOME HISPANICS

Linda S. Gossett* and Marilyn C. Bischoff

ABSTRACT:

Two University of Idaho Extension Educators developed the program, Put Your Skills to Work (PYSTW), to teach Hispanic adults job search and retention skills, English language instruction, and information about community resources. Students attended classes two evenings per week at a neighborhood church. Ten to fifteen unemployed or underemployed adults attended classes during the program. Many brought their children to on-site childcare. Support people included a bilingual program coordinator, a bilingual childcare coordinator and teen helpers, Hispanic advisory committee members, mentors from a Survival Spanish class and community volunteers. The Educators adapted materials for PYSTW from California's CES "Gateway to a Better Life" and Texas' CES "Moving Ahead Through the Maze of Change." The forty hour course included: English as it relates to employment, assessing current job-related skills, goal setting, creating a work history, filling out job applications, interviewing skills, time management, employer expectations, performance assessments, employee benefits, workers' rights, and basic computer literacy. Nearly 50 students graduated during the year. Students completed pre- and post-course assessments. Post-test assessments indicated the following improvements: understanding English, discovering transferable skills, setting goals, writing a resume, completing job applications, preparing for job interviews, discussing employee benefits, calling a boss when they couldn't work, and negotiating conflicts. The Educators learned: how to recruit new immigrants, to involve family members, instruction should be interactive, students need individual assistance, participants do not understand many work-related terms, Anglo volunteers can be effective, that wording of evaluations must be pre-tested, and to anticipate a high attrition rate.

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OHIO STATE UNIVERSITY EXTENSION COMMUNITY-BASED WATERSHED MANAGEMENT PROGRAM

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ABSTRACT:

The Ohio State University Extension Community-Based Watershed Management Program is comprised of five agents that work with more than 100 local watershed groups throughout Ohio. Watershed management agent work areas are determined by using watershed boundaries as opposed to traditional county and district political boundaries. Watershed management agents assist with watershed planning, meeting facilitation, serve on steering committees and provide leadership in education and outreach activities. In addition, a program leader based on the main OSU campus administers The Ohio Watershed Academy which is a distance based learning program for watershed coordinators. Agents assist local coordinators with assignments and assist the academy program leader with statewide meetings that allow local watershed leaders to network several times a year with other watershed coordinators. The program leader with the help of campus support staff also administers the Ohio Watershed Network (OWN). The network contains a website with links to community watershed group home pages and relevant state and federal agencies and a heavily used listserv ohwatersheds@ag.ohio-state.edu, which serves as an excellent communication forum that allows subscribers to post information such as position announcements, technical questions, upcoming conferences/meetings, and research needs. Watershed agents also help link graduate students and other campus researchers to real world projects that assist local watershed groups with their monitoring, restoration and protection efforts. In addition agents serve on area assistance teams that assist local watershed groups with 319 grant writing and review.

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CREATING ACCESS FOR MINORITY AUDIENCES THROUGH EXTENSION PROGRAMMING-- THE LATINO RESOURCE CENTER

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ABSTRACT:

Situation: Teton County Wyoming is geographically unique, including two national parks and two national forests within its boundary. The county's economic life blood rides on sales tax and tourism. The tourism industry desperate for seasonal workers began to utilize foreign seasonal workers. As early as 1994, dialogue about how to assist Spanish speaking workers requesting local services was occurring during meetings with local agencies. In the fall of 1999, the CES agent facilitated a meeting with several county departments and concerned citizens to ascertain what might be done to improve the situation in Teton County for our increasing Hispanic population. Objective: To facilitate the development of a one stop service which provides individuals from other countries to access the services and information needed within the Jackson Hole Community. Methods: Extension's expertise in building Community Capacity were utilized: Group Building, Facilitation, Consensus Building, Creative Problem Solving. Results/Outcomes: The effort began in 1999 as the Hispanic Family Resource Center under the 501c3 of the local Catholic Church. Our research in successful efforts with minority groups revealed the importance of a secure place for minorities. Many of the individuals accessing the Center are illegally in the United States, the majority of those here legally are fearful of being "sent back". In the fall of 2001 a strategic planning retreat of the Board of Directors of the HFRC determined that the time had come to become our own 501(c) 3. The Extension agent prepared the application for tax free status, has assisted with fund raising efforts, obtained grants to provide an Attorney In-Service on Immigration Law, Language can be a barrier to programming with minorities. This effort suggests there are skills which are inherent within the Cooperative Extension Service which can be brought to the table to ensure that minority audiences have access to programs and services.

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ESTABLISHMENT OF NEW AMISH COMMUNITIES: MIGRATION ATTRACTION FACTORS

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ABSTRACT:

This research project will explain and identify the decision point factors concerning migration of (Holmes County) Amish. Specifically, the migration attraction factors that influence the decision to establish a new Amish community. Leaders in the Amish community have self-identified, through interviews and on site visits in two states, the factors, present trends, and patterns as observed about this issue. Holmes County and its contiguous counties have the distinction of being the site of the largest Amish population in the world. It is currently estimated that 18,000 Amish live in Holmes County, about 40 percent of the total population. The Amish migrated in the 1800's to Holmes County from eastern Pennsylvania. The Amish have maintained their language, culture and traditions despite the influences of the modern world. During the last 20 years, Holmes County has increased dramatically its business and tourist industries. This has had considerable impact on the county's economic status bringing new businesses, jobs, and opportunities for residents. Although this has positively affected the Amish population's economic status, it has also impacted the Amish in many other ways, including the ongoing migration to other farmland areas, both within and external to Holmes County. Formation of new Amish settlements are not simply a solution to the scarcity of farmland. Migration attraction factors as self-identified by Amish leaders will be examined and discussed. Want to attract Amish to your community? The migration attraction factorial list will be available, with insights and explanations of variables.

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