

FY 2008 Initiative Fund Staff Development Grant Project Report

MnSCU Institution
Hibbing Community College

Report submitted by:
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Project: Staff Development of Indian Culture

The project proposal was submitted to allow Hibbing Community College to develop a program that begins to explain the culture and business practices of India. The program was to be shared with businesses, educators, and general residents of NE Minnesota.

The training syllabus is complete. Many materials, including videos, books, and general information has been received from organizations such as the Indian Consulate in Washington D.C. However, the project has not met the timeline as originally proposed. In addition, no funds from the grant have been distributed to date.

Information that was being discussed at the time of the proposal led NE Minnesota residents to believe that the Minnesota Steel project would have been started already and people beginning to move here. The original grant timeline was set up based on those assumptions. The Minnesota Steel project start date slipped and the number of staff moving here appears to have shrunk dramatically. To date, there is six (6) staff on the project from India and no families have moved here. It was only within the last week that information about the project again began to filter out. In fact, representatives from Iron Range Resources recently met with executives from Essar Steel, the owner of Minnesota Steel, and were assured that groundbreaking will take place this summer.

The grant project timeline has been adjusted so that the program could be introduced to business, educators, and residents by the start of the fall school year. There is also a full day conference being planned in Hibbing that will focus on "Doing Business with India" to be scheduled in late September or early October. Hibbing Community College is partnering with regional businesses and local chambers to sponsor this event. Funding for this event is not grant related.

It is our intention to continue work on this project. We believe it must be completed to increase the awareness of opportunities that will exist to communities in NE Minnesota due to its new residents from India. Therefore, we would like to retain the grant to fund the completion of this project.