

Staff Development Grant Final Report

Riverland Community College

Project: “Culture Capsule” action learning project – new name “Global Voices”

Description: This project is an action learning project born from the Riverland leadership academy. After researching diverse cultures, participants will be providing resources for the larger campus community.

Project leader: Celeste Ruble, Director, Human Resources

Award: \$2,500

Project Re-cap

The participants of the Riverland Employee Leadership Program conducted approximately 25 hours on research, formulating questions, and preparing for the focus groups and the faculty survey. In addition to this preparation, they held 4 informational sessions with faculty and students, and attended 2 RCC Inclusion Committee meetings that provided them with information to begin the design of an informational tool. These specialized focus groups helped them to delineate specific data for each of the ethnic groups or cultures within our three communities. With the assistance of the college web developer, Sandra Roe, and Shawn Martin, office of technology, a site was created on the College intranet site with a database, video clips, and a blogging link.

Web page development: 40 hours of development and testing & Office of Instructional Technology video production and testing:35 hours	Total	\$1,100
Library software purchase (University of Mpls Minitex)		870
Marketing pieces and research with focus groups		530

Impact:

This project was determined after a Staff Diversity Measurement Survey was adapted and administered for college faculty to determine needs in the classroom. The results of the survey contained information about three areas of local cultures consideration - a)knowledge b)awareness and c)skills. The skills area rated 60% of respondents would like additional information on Hispanic cultures; 50% more information on Somalis culture; 30% write-in for more information Sudanese culture; and 70% named Cultural Seminars as preferred learning venue.

Our objective was to utilize the 2007-2008 Riverland Employee Leadership Program participants to design and build an informational tool that provided detailed and specific data for each of the ethnic groups or cultures within our three communities.

The following segments were required to be included in the project for each capsule to contain: 3-4 page summary document, electronically accessible, and could be used alone or as starting point for cultural seminars or department discussions.

The objectives described in the proposal were met with some modifications:

- The capsules are located on the college intranet website which also incorporates a library database; it can be viewed or printed.
- A website was created on the college intranet site as it was determined that D2L was not the best method for this dissemination. This was especially important if we provided this access to community members.
- This project has already been presented to the College Inclusion committee which consists of college and community members and it was presented to the supervisor and administrative team at Riverland Community College. It will also be showcased at the faculty and staff workshop days in the upcoming academic year.
- We will use this as a starting piece for our individual training sessions, during a brown-bag lunch, workshop breakout sessions, or designated diversity training throughout the year.
- The College Regional Diversity Investigator and Trainer will manage the website and will include information from the Inclusion Committee to further our efforts. It will continue to be a development tool but will also be informative as our diverse populations continue to grow.

Reflection

The employee leadership development program participants brought different learning styles to this project which struggled in the beginning; however, after using their new leadership techniques began to build a great product that can be used internally with our faculty and staff development. This is a product that could be used with employee development with external college partners.

All projects need ownership from the very beginning and the participants struggled a little with embracing the concept. I believe the block was the inability of each participant to know how each individual style or their personal dynamic would play a significant role in this creation. They found this connection but it was several months into the program. In the future, I think that I would design the leadership program to include the strengths-building session at an offsite location with an overnight stay that could incorporate more in-depth connections between personal and group dynamics. This was suggested by the team after experiencing this session later in the program.