

Staff Development Grant

Mesabi Range Community and Technical College

Project: Mesabi Range Learning Institute – Promoting Staff Development

Description: Communicate, promote, track and monitor professional staff development opportunities.

Project leader: Roxanne Richards and Shelly McCauley Jugovich

Award: \$2,500

Project Re-cap:

Our project supported the development of a one-stop resource for professional development. We created a web page that allows staff to easily access information on training and development opportunities offered by MnSCU, our Northeast Higher Education District (NHED), and our campus. We utilized D2L to track the successful completion of the MnSCU core courses, Data Privacy and Code of Conduct. We also surveyed our campus community to seek feedback on what types of professional development opportunities were needed. Based on this survey, we implemented Atomic Learning (anytime learning), Continuing Education classes and coordinated hands-on training, small group on-campus, one-on-one, self-paced, and online training. We encouraged campus staff to utilize WebEx as a tool to supplement their learning. Costs were as follows:

Website Development: \$500

Atomic Learning: \$600

Promotional materials, preparation, surveys, facilitation fees: \$1000

Wrap-up session: \$400

Impact:

Through the Mesabi Range Learning Institute, we were able to customize professional development opportunities to meet the needs of our campus community.

Our staff took part in Hyperion BRIO sessions, Cap Server Training, ISRS training, Resource 25, Microsoft Office 2007, WebEx, Atomic Learning video training tutorials, and MnSCU training.

This project increased the comfort level in using WebEx as a tool for training and support and allowed for just-in-time training. The WebEx sessions promoted hands-on support that has been very beneficial and positively received – allowing our staff to seek training whenever needed as opposed to when a training session is offered and prescheduled. This model of training has saved our staff valuable time by not having to travel to training sessions. (Outside the scope of this project, an added benefit was the cost savings for our college by reducing travel expenses for off-site training.)

Our follow-up survey is scheduled in early June and will assist us in identifying future needs for professional development and training support for our campus community.

Reflections:

Making a time commitment for professional development and having access to training and support when needed (often immediately) are valued and often a critical factor for our staff on campus. In today's busy and demanding work environment, professional development opportunities must be easily accessed, readily available, offered in a variety of formats (different learning styles), and promoted regularly. Through this project, we have discovered that college staff members are not always aware of training opportunities or alternate methods of support for training and development. The Staff Development Grant provided us with an opportunity to promote professional development opportunities for our staff and explore various learning tools and resources to meet their training needs.

Our project empowered college staff to access professional development opportunities that they may not have in the past. Our continued goal for the Mesabi Range Learning Institute will be to continue to promote our website as a one-stop resource for our staff to learn about and access professional development.

Through our project, we learned that college staff value the opportunity to seek professional development via "ready access." As a result of our project and survey, we will continue to encourage our staff to be self-directed learners. We believe this will be ever more important as we strive to stay current with new learning and technology for our jobs, maintain efficiency and make the best use of our budget resources. The use of WebEx, online tutorials, and on campus opportunities allows many avenues for viability and growth for our staff and college campus. We look forward to continuing an awareness campaign of these great learning opportunities.