

”Empresario de Hoy” Program Summary

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The Blue Mountain Community College Small Business Centers offered the “Empresario de Hoy” (“Today’s Entrepreneur”) program in Hermiston during June and July of 2006.

Licensing, banking, hiring, marketing, and business planning were among the topics covered in this 6-week program. The workshop was designed for anyone who wanted to start a business or make their current business more successful. Having this program available in Spanish meant we could offer a high level of business owner skills training without a language barrier.

To insure follow-through, business owners were encouraged to register for free business counseling at Blue Mountain Community College Small Business Development Centers.

Workshop sessions and materials are entirely in Spanish, and follow the award-winning NxLevel program for entrepreneurial development. Workshop instructors are Jose Arias and Art Hill, experienced independent business owners and certified NxLevel instructors. The fee of \$95.00 included registration, workbook, and a light supper to accommodate tight business owner schedules.

Target outcomes were met or exceeded by the program. One business has since participated in other Blue Mountain Community College Small Business Development Center programs and has agreed to be profiled as an SBDC “success story.”

In addition to the program’s success in delivering the target outcomes to the business owners, it should be noted that it resulted in a clear and effective process for reaching the Hispanic business community with information on small business development programs. According to Mr. Arias, “We used print and radio media, and made personal calls on business owners. We enrolled 5 businesses in an area with a population of approximately 3,600 Hispanics. In contrast, a program in neighboring Washington state enrolled just 8 businesses in an area with a population of over 71,000 Hispanics. We now have a complete package of promotional materials and methods we can re-use to offer the program regionally and statewide.”

We will follow up with “success story” profiles of the businesses who agree to be featured, as well as photos and additional information on them. We will also maintain contact with the owners to stay informed of their progress, and to keep them informed of related SBDC and OECD programs.

For further information, please contact Jill Pursel at jpursel@bluecc.edu.