



Governor’s Best Practices in Workforce & Economic Development Award Nomination Application

Nominated Project Title: Community-Based Business Training Program

Project Lead Name: Rafael Sanchez **Phone number** (206) 352-1945 **E-mail**
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Summary of nominated project (No more than two sentences.): Washington CASH uniquely reaches microentrepreneurs who are disenfranchised through the Community-Based Business Training Program by providing culturally-appropriate and linguistically-accessible business development training, technical assistance and other resources for Somali, Ethiopian, Eritrean and Vietnamese low-income entrepreneurs.

Region and/or communities benefitting from project: City of Seattle

When (month and year) did nominated project launch: January 2011

Has the project/activity operated continuously since then: yes
If not, explain:

Start-up costs \$150,000 **Most recent annual budget:** \$1.6 million for organization overall;
\$100,000 for this project.

List your major funding sources, including tax credits or incentives, grants, and other private sector support: For the overall organization, funding sources include private foundation grants (the Seattle Foundation, Medina Foundation, Norcliffe Foundation, etc.), corporate grants and sponsorships (Boeing, JP Morgan Chase, Wells Fargo, etc.), individual donors, and public funding (US Treasury, Department of Health & Human Services, etc.). For this project specifically, funding is from the City of Seattle's Office of Economic Development.

Describe the purpose (need) and the unique approach taken by the nominated project to satisfy the stated need (450 words or less) This program is the outcome of several years of conversation with immigrant business leaders, who felt disconnected from existing business training, technical assistance and support programs. Despite their best efforts, many of the existing resources are not adequately marketed to or connected with the immigrant and refugee communities. Most of the available training is in English and formatted in a way that is best suited to native English-speakers.

Washington CASH’s CBBT Program has tailored effective, innovative microenterprise development services to the unique needs of entrepreneurs within Seattle’s Somali, Ethiopian, Eritrean and Vietnamese communities in partnership with the City of Seattle’s Office of Economic Development.

In each of the immigrant communities a business trainer has been hired from within that community. The business trainers, fluent in each community’s language, teach the trainings in the appropriate languages; all written materials, such as worksheets, are translated. Trainings are interactive, with hands-on learning. Trainings are highly visual to aid in the transmission of information. Through trainings and one-on-one technical assistance sessions, participants complete simple business plans, and become knowledgeable about marketing plans, legal

entity choices, taxes and other topics. Training sessions are held at community centers within the immigrant communities.

Special partnerships have been forged via memorandums of understanding between Washington CASH and community-based immigrant organizations such as Horn of Africa Services, the Vietnamese Friendship Association, and Asian Counseling and Referral Services. By hiring members of the community associated with these agencies, developing each curriculum alongside leaders from each community, and partnering with these groups in outreach, Washington CASH established trust within each community. In doing so, the program has reached entrepreneurs that have previously not been adequately served by other entrepreneurial training programs.

The trainer for each community translates information regarding microenterprise services and liaises with Washington CASH staff to ensure subsequent services are accessible to the Somali, Ethiopian, Eritrean and Vietnamese participants. Services include:

- a.) Microloans from \$1,000 - \$5,000: Peer loans are collateral-free and do not look at credit scores or other traditional underwriting scoring; they are provided on the basis of “social collateral” built amongst group members.
- b.) Business groups: Business groups meet twice per month to facilitate new loans, and are lead by volunteer mentors who help clients avoid pitfalls that often derail fledgling businesses.
- c.) Advanced workshops and individual technical assistance.
- d.) Business Builder loans: Low cost, collateralized loans between \$5,000 and \$35,000 can be used to invest in equipment, purchase inventory, or hire employees.
- e.) Access to Markets: CBBT clients sell products in Ventures, Washington CASH’s retail store in downtown Seattle.
- f.) Individual Development Accounts (or IDAs): IDAs are savings accounts matched two-to-one to capitalize a business and encourage lifelong savings habits.

Describe how the nominated project incorporates both workforce and economic development practices and provides a benefit to workers and employers. (See cover page) (250 words or less) This project supports self-employment for immigrant entrepreneurs. By strengthening their business practices and supporting a solid foundation in best small business practices, these micro-enterprises are best positioned for success and more likely to grow to hire others. Many of these entrepreneurs would have challenges securing employment in the mainstream job market because of lack of transferability of degrees and experience. For them, self-employment and entrepreneurial development is the most appropriate workforce development strategy.

Will the nominated project continue into the future? Yes

If yes, how will it be funded and sustained. (200 words) Washington CASH intends to sustain funding for this project through diverse, multiple funding streams. We are seeking funding from the Seattle Foundation and City of Seattle for the program-specific expenses in 2012, and have confirmed funding from the U.S. Treasury to sustain operational activities.

In an attachment, demonstrate how this project/activity has made a quantifiable difference to the economic health of working people and employers. (Tables and graphs based on verifiable numbers. Words should be used only to support the data and should be kept to a minimum)

Check when done.

A short concluding statement on why you believe this project/activity is noteworthy or unique and should serve as a best practice model. (100 words or less) This program has been particularly successful because it is tailored to meet special challenges faced by immigrant entrepreneurs. The training curriculum addresses challenges specific to immigrant business owners, such as proper licensing, tax filing and health department compliance. In addition, outreach has been partnered with other community based organizations to build on existing trusted relationships and community connections. The execution of this program has been wildly successful, with more than 50 immigrant business owners completing training in the first six months and classes maintaining waiting lists because demand in the East African community, in particular, has been so strong.

Program or Project’s website or webpage: www.washingtoncash.org/grow-your-business/CBBT

List the leading individual(s) or organization(s) that should receive special recognition for their role in the project or activity. Please provide name, title, role, address and phone number.

Rafael Sanchez, CBBT Program Manager

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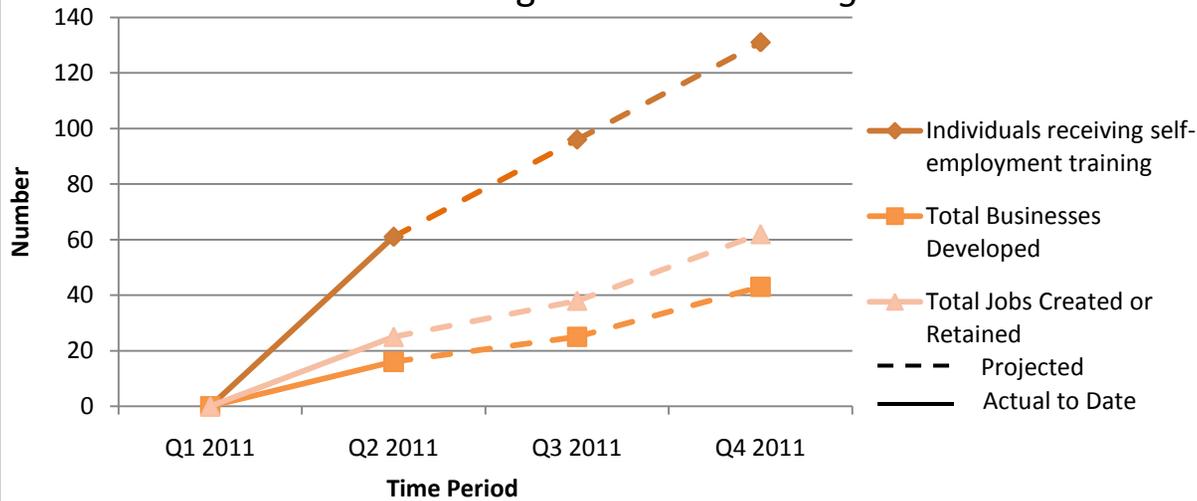
Seattle, WA 98144

(206) 352-1945

Rafa put together a highly qualified and motivated team of CBBT trainers - one trainer from each of the three immigrant communities - as well as developed each of the three curriculums, had all materials translated into three languages, trained the trainers, did outreach into immigrants communities, worked tirelessly with partner agencies to recruit clients, managed the trainers as they provided services, and performed evaluation.

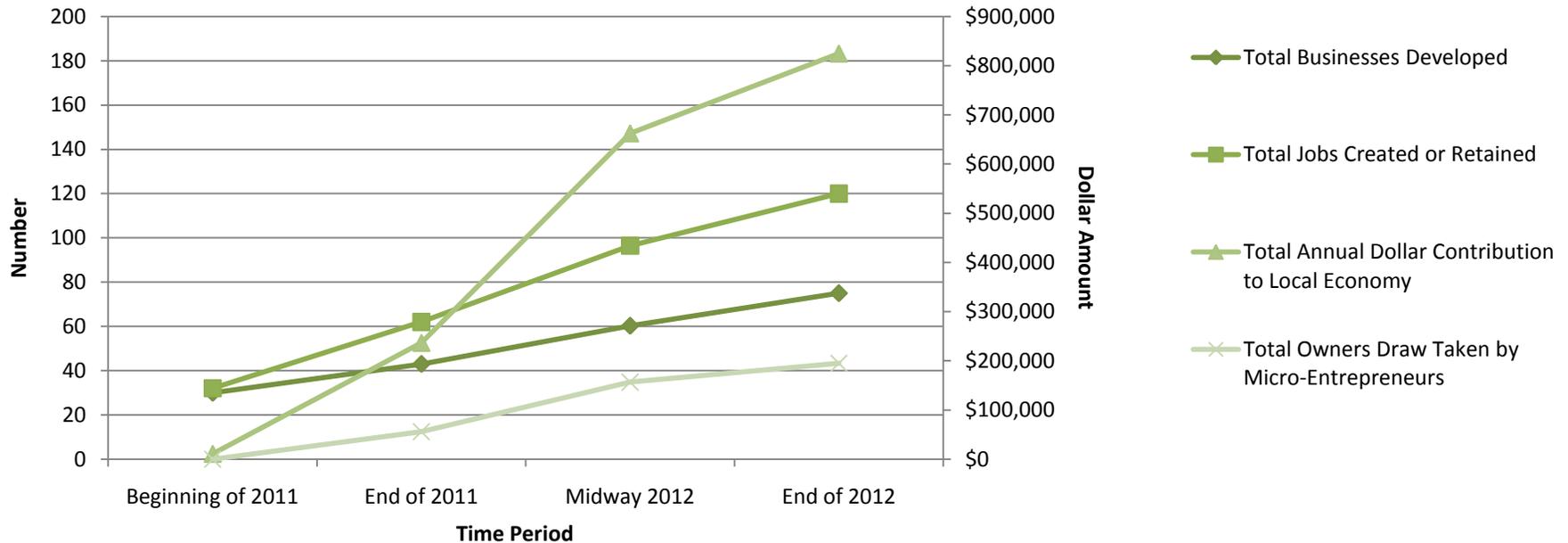
Name and contact information of person completing this nomination form: Jorji Knickrehm, Grants Manager, Washington CASH, (206) 352-1945, ext. 223, jorji@washingtoncash.org

Short-Term Economic Effects of the 2011 Washington CASH SEV Program



*Projections are based on the median revenue and owner's draw increases reported by survey respondents 18 months after participating in the Washington CASH program. Projections were calculated using averages from 5 years worth of research facilitated by the Aspen Institute and FIELD, through their standardized survey instrument for microenterprise development organizations called MicroTest.

Projected Long-Term Economic Effects of the 2011 Washington CASH SEV Program



CBBT Business Story: Asfaha Ougbatsion and *King's Café*

Written by Solomon Tsegaslassie, Washington CASH Ethiopian/Eritrean Business Trainer

Originally from Eritrea, Asfaha Ougbatsion is married and has two children and he and his wife are working parents. Mr. Ougbatsion had a dream of opening a business here in America but did not have a business plan or training in business development. He thought of importing a product from Africa and made some communication with an African producer but he did not succeed. One day he heard that a small coffee shop with store was for sale and he leased it with a business partner who has similar intentions of opening a business.

Mr. Ougbatsion and his partner started to discuss what kind of business they will create, and thought of various things like cultural food, coffee and possibly a grocery altogether but could not come to a decision. The business concept changed frequently and did not open, and they still had to pay monthly rent, and as a result their financial capital started to drain.

They did not have clear financial plan. Three months passed and still they had no clear business concept and became frustrated. They lost hope, stopped discussing this business and went their separate ways. But they have to pay the monthly rent until their lease period ends.

In the meantime Mr. Ougbatsion heard about the Washington C.A.S.H. business development training (BDT) and he joined the class this summer.

While training, Mr. Ougbatsion shared his story in the class. He described his story as “putting the cart before the horse”. He shared the lesson with the class that he should have taken this class first and developed a completed business plan before leasing the place. He shared his lesson with his business partner and she was motivated and re-started discussions about their business.

Now Mr. Ougbatsion completed his BDT and with his partner developed a business plan, organized a management team and found a mentor.

They have now got their business license!

Their new business, *King's Café*, will have a grand opening the first of August 2011 and their marketing team is already on full swing to bring the community together in this great and exciting first day of their business and beyond.

Mr. Ougbatsion and his partner are also planning to join a Washington C.A.S.H. business group to receive ongoing business development services and support. All the class and I, the instructor, are excited and waiting for this grand opening, to witness and be part of this story.