**Rural Community Assistance Corporation**

**Job Description**

***Rural Development Specialist – Economic Development***

**Classification:** *Grade E* **Department:** *Community & Environmental Services*

**Status:** *Exempt* **Supervisor:** *Rural Development Specialist II– Economic Development*

**Organization**

Founded in 1978, RCAC is a 501(c)(3) non-profit that provides training, technical and financial resources and advocacy so low-income rural communities can achieve their goals and visions. Our dedicated staff and active board is working to make our vision of vibrant, healthy and enduring rural communities a reality across the West.

**Community and Environment Services**

RCAC’s environmental staff works with rural water, wastewater and solid waste systems to make them sustainable. Staff works with the volunteer boards of directors and staff of the small systems to make sure they comply with state and federal regulations and understand the finances and operations of the systems. The outcomes of staff work will bring systems into compliance with state and federal sustainability and train boards and staff on accepted management practices.

**Position Description**

The Rural Development Specialist (RDS) position will assist the Building Rural Economies (BRE) coordinator (RDS II) with the expansion of our rural economic development initiative.

Major responsibilities of the position include, but are not limited to: work with rural communities to identify and develop strategies that lead to new economic opportunities; work with small rural communities to build and implement wealth building strategies including business development plans, applications for funding proposals, feasibility studies and general business development research needed for the BRE program.

**Specific job goals, objectives and tasks are established for each employee as part of the annual evaluation and work plan processes. Examples of general responsibilities and duties include, but are not limited to the following:**

**Work with Communities**

* Provide technical assistance and coaching to small rural communities in identifying economic opportunities and developing an entrepreneurial culture
* Assist communities to build leadership, entrepreneurial and economic development networks
* Facilitate local planning and economic development programs
* Assist communities to identify resources and funding opportunities
* Provide technical assistance to rural communities within the RCAC footprint

**Work with RCAC staff**

* Assist in developing tools and resources for entrepreneurial support including a rural entrepreneurial curriculum.
* Program and project funding directly or pass through from federal, state and regional private and public agencies
* Financing for entrepreneurs and real estate projects through RCAC’s Community Development Financial Institution (CDFI)

# Minimum Qualifications

**Preferred Experience, Skills and Education:**

Experience:

Five (5) years of experience in a combination of the following:

* Developing market studies, feasibility studies and business plans.
* Developing successful economic development initiatives for small rural communities of less than 25,000 population
* Supporting entrepreneurs to start and grow businesses
* Leadership within a local economic development commission
* Private sector experience in economic development
* Direct experience working with tribes to develop and administer economic and community development projects on tribal land
* Multicultural work particularly with Native American and Latin American communities

Skills:

Practical experience with three or more of the following:

* Project development
* Community organizing
* Working with different models of local ownership and control.
* Assessments, strategic planning, and program design.

Preferred Education:

Bachelor’s degree in related field (additional qualifying experience may be substituted)

**Knowledge of:**

Economic development networks within the RCAC footprint and national organizations

Principles of adult learning

Program development and grant writing techniques, especially using an Outcomes Framework

Performance management

Nonprofit, tribal, and local agency and rural community dynamics

Federal, state, tribal and local government agencies, programs, and issues around community development

**Ability to:**

Think and talk from a business perspective ~~c~~

Talk to business people and communities outside of the standard models

Build teams and help establish trusting relationships

Use good judgment both in independent and team environments

Provide quality customer service

Facilitate meetings

Develop and conduct participant centered training

Analyze business/operation systems and organizations

Use initiative to approach troubleshooting and problem-solving alternatives

Organize and prioritize work to meet established timelines

Effectively listen and communicate both verbally and in writing

Use a personal computer at proficiently using Microsoft Office

Work with minimum supervision and handle multiple priorities simultaneously

Perform research and analysis

**Physical Job Requirements:**

The physical demands described here are representative of those that must be met by an employee to successfully perform the essential functions of this position. Reasonable accommodations may be made to enable individuals with disabilities to perform the essential functions.

Work performed in an office requires ability to operate computers and various pieces of office equipment, including telephone. Use may be moderate (average 2 hours per day) to heavy (4 or more hours per day)

While performing the duties of this position, the employee is frequently required to stand and/or sit for prolonged periods of time; walk; talk; hear; use hand to finger; handle; feel or operate objects, tools or controls; and reach with hands and arms. The employee is occasionally required to climb or balance; stoop, kneel, crouch or crawl.

The employee may occasionally lift and or move up to 25 pounds. Specific vision abilities required by this job include close vision, distance vision, color vision, peripheral vision, depth perception and the ability to adjust focus.

This position also requires travel from a minimum (2 days per month) up to (10 days per month) automobile and airline travel, including overnight travel.

**Special Requirements:**

Possession of a valid driver’s license and proof of insurance that meets the minimum requirements ($100,000/$300,000) of RCAC corporate liability policy may be required when traveling for business purposes.

Office or personal residence must be within one hour’s drive of a major airport.