*Rural Community Assistance Corporation*

**Job Description**

***Rural Development Specialist – Community & Economic Development***

**Classification:** *Grade E* **Department:** *Community and**Environmental*

**Status:** *Exempt* **Supervisor:** *Regional Environmental Manager, C&E*

**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 Environmental Services**

RCAC’s comprehensive community and environmental services support rural communities to create a vision, set goals and implement an action plan for community development projects. The Building Rural Economies (BRE) initiative trains and builds community support for entrepreneurial development based on local resources and supply chains. BRE builds the capacity of local sponsoring organizations to network, plan and implement economic development initiatives in rural communities.

**Position Description**

The Rural Development Specialist (RDS) will assist the BRE team with the expansion of our rural economic development initiative. Major responsibilities 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 using the BRE program’s training and technical assistance curriculum.

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

* Provide training, technical assistance and coaching to small rural communities within the RCAC footprint to identify and implement economic opportunities for a place-based entrepreneurial culture
* Assist communities to build leadership, entrepreneurial and economic development networks
* Facilitate local planning and leadership development programs
* Provide training and technical assistance to small rural communities to develop and submit federal, state and private applications to fund local economic and community development goals
* Assist communities to identify and secure resources for sustainable operations
* Work with BRE staff to develop tools and resources to cultivate local entrepreneurship; support community work plan development and implementation; and provide research and writing support for market studies, feasibility analysis, project financing, and business plans.
* Assist small rural communities to finance new small businesses and community facilities through RCAC’s Loan Fund

**Skills and Qualifications**

* Knowledge of economic development networks
* Knowledge of principles of adult learning
* Knowledge of program development and grant writing using an outcomes framework
* Knowledge of performance management principles
* Ability to think and talk from a business perspective
* Ability to talk to business people and communities outside RCAC’s regional footprint about economic development
* Ability to build teams and establish trust
* Proficiency with computer software including Microsoft Office
* Ability to effectively listen and communicate, verbally and in writing
* Ability to work with minimum supervision and handle multiple priorities simultaneously
* Ability to organize and prioritize work to meet established timelines
* Ability to use good judgment, both independently and as part of a team
* Ability to provide high quality customer service
* Ability to perform research and analysis
* Ability to facilitate meetings
* Ability to develop and conduct participant-centered trainings
* Ability to analyze business/operation systems and organizations
* Ability to use initiative to troubleshoot and problem solve

**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 persons 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 moderate (up to 2 days per month) to heavy (up to 10 days per month) automobile and airline travel, including overnight travel.

**Preferred Education and Experience**

A combination of experience and education is required to qualify for the position.

A typical qualifying combination would be:

Experience:

Three years of applicable experience in community economic development. Experience in project management. Experience in training, facilitating and mediating community programs/projects is highly desirable. (If a higher level of related education is possessed than is required, this education may be substituted for the experience requirement up to a maximum of one year).

Education:

Bachelor’s degree (additional qualifying experience may be substituted for the required education).

**Special Requirements**

Possession of a valid drivers' license and proof of insurance that meets the minimum requirements of RCAC corporate liability policy will be required when traveling for business purposes.