*Rural Community Assistance Corporation*

**Job Description**

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

**Classification:** *Grade 10* **Department:** *Community and**Environmental Services*

**Status:** *Exempt* **Supervisor:** *RDS III or Regional Field Manager*

**Organization**

Founded in 1978, RCAC seeks to collaboratively build the capacity of organizations that serve low-income people living in the rural West (13 states including Alaska and Hawaii). RCAC works in partnership with small rural and Indigenous communities and other local agencies to provide tools and resources necessary to improve their quality of life. RCAC offers a wide range of services to communities with fewer than 50,000 people including technical assistance and training for environmental infrastructure; affordable housing development; economic and leadership development; and financing to support community development. Since its inception, RCAC’s dedicated staff and active board have helped affect positive change in rural and Indigenous communities across the West.

**Community and Environmental Services**

RCAC’s comprehensive community and economic development services support rural and indigenous communities to create a vision, set goals and implement an action plan for community economic development. The Building Rural Economies (BRE) program provides technical assistance, coaching and training to strengthen community capacity leading to vibrant rural economies. BRE builds capacity for local sponsoring organizations, entrepreneurs and small businesses.

**Position Description**

The Rural Development Specialist (RDS) works with the BRE team to meet contact deliverables to strengthen rural communities. Major responsibilities include but are not limited to: work with rural communities to identify and develop strategies that lead to new community economic opportunities; work with communities to build and implement wealth building strategies using the BRE program’s tools including technical assistance, small business coaching and training curricula.

**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 technical assistance, coaching and training to rural communities, entrepreneurs and small businesses within the RCAC footprint to identify and implement community economic opportunities strengthening local economies.
* Assist communities to build leadership, entrepreneurial and community economic development projects and networks.
* Coach entrepreneurs and small businesses, providing training on financials, cash flow, marketing and elements related to effective business practices.
* Implementation of community economic development projects
* Facilitate and train leadership development programs.
* Provide technical assistance to small rural communities to identify, develop and submit federal, state and private applications to fund local community economic development goals.
* Assist communities and community development corporations 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.
* Perform other tasks as assigned.

**Skills and Qualifications**

* Knowledge of community economic development tools, funders, and networks
* Knowledge and ability to coach small businesses through all phases from ideation to maturity
* Knowledge of financial tools used to evaluate an organization’s and business’ health
* Knowledge of principles of adult learning
* Knowledge of program development and grant writing using an outcomes framework
* Knowledge of performance management principles
* Ability to work effectively in teams and establish trust
* Proficiency with computer software including Microsoft Office Suite
* 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 for BRE’s curricula
* 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 two days per month) to heavy (up to ten 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 driver’s license and proof of insurance that meets the minimum requirements ($100,000/$300,000) of RCAC corporate liability policy will be required when traveling for business purposes.

*RCAC is an equal opportunity employer and considers all employees and job applicants without regard to race, religion, color, gender, sex, age, national origin, disability, veteran status, sexual orientation, gender identity or marital status, or any other status protected by law. RCAC strives to reflect the diverse constituencies that the organization serves.*