

Priority: Accountability
Program Offer Type: Existing Operating
Related Programs: 71006A

Lead Agency: Non-Departmental - All
Program Contact: April Lewis

Frameworks:

Executive Summary

Accelerated change and increasingly multicultural communities are reflected in the county's workplace. In this climate everyone benefits from learning more about diversity and developing skills that help us get our work done more effectively and efficiently. For the past 11 years Multnomah County has participated as a partner in an annual diversity training conference for employees. For many of those years the city of Portland has contributed revenue (\$15,000) as a partner and for the last two years Clackamas County has become a contributing partner (\$10,000). This one day conference is designed to give county employees an opportunity to attend a high quality training in a very affordable way.

Program Description

Each year the county has worked with its partners the city and clackamas county to provide a wide variety of diversity learning opportunities during the conference. In 2004 there were over 30 sessions covering an extensive range of topics and applications. The sessions are always practical and focus on tools that have application in the workplace. Last year a total of 1000 Multnomah County, City of Portland and Clackamas County employees and officials participated in the event. In addition to the excellent quality of the presentations, this event provides much needed networking opportunities between the three jurisdictions. Often this is the only time elected officials and executive level managers and employees, from the three organizations, come together to address issues of diversity and cultural competency.

Program Justification

The diversity conference is tied to the accountability priority area as part of the strategy to strengthen both workforce competencies and the work environment itself in order to achieve quality results. The annual conference, because it is an event that is co-sponsored by Multnomah County, the City of Portland, and Clackamas County, gives the County a greater return on its investment than might be anticipated for several reasons. One, the expenses incurred in the conferences are shared by three agencies. Two, the cost of attendance is kept at the low cost of \$50 per person. Three, the conference is part of a broad commitment to diversity that has its foundation in good business practice. A commitment to diversity is a primary driving force behind creating a positive work environment for all employees, which in turn leads to all employees performing at the highest level. This in turn improves measurable performance results, attracts high-potential employees, improves the retention of quality employees, thereby lowering the costs of replacing quality employees, reduces absenteeism due to job dissatisfaction, enhances creativity, reduces lost productivity due to interpersonal conflict, and reduces the likelihood of litigation that occurs as a result of employee complaints and dissatisfaction. A commitment to diversity also enhances the image of the organization in the community and helps maintain the best possible relationships with community members, including, significantly, vendors and other stakeholders. There are many positive aspects to a good relationship between the County and the community, not the least of which is its contribution to a positive work environment for all employees. If the county does not provide our financial contribution to this effort, we will lose the funding from the other two jurisdictions and in all likelihood will lose our ability to provide this valuable and necessary diversity learning opportunity.

Performance Measures

The conference evaluations tend to be very positive from year to year. We have compiled comparison data since 2000. The same measures will be used in upcoming conferences to measure effectiveness of individual presentations and overall satisfaction and usefulness of the conference. See summary for specific measures. For overall satisfaction - 90% of respondents will rate between 5 (good) and 6 (excellent). Positive transfer of learning back on the job will also show 90% of respondents rate between 5 (good) and 6 (excellent).

Summary of last year's program results and this year's expected results

The diversity conference continues to receive excellent evaluations. We have been tracking the same data for the past 4 years and the evaluations are positive. Evaluation data shows a consistently high degree of satisfaction with and usefulness of the conference. Over 300 employees attended the conference and 91% rated it either a good or an excellent use of their time. On a scale of 1-6, with 6 being strongly agree, overall participants gave a 5.4 rating to the statement, "I learned skills and ideas that will help me provide better quality services for the people that I help". They also gave a 5.2 rating to the statement "diversity events are necessary for my professional development".

Program Mandate: 4 Program and Funding Level Choice

Revenue/Expense Detail

	Proposed General Fund	Proposed Other Funds	Proposed General Fund	Proposed Other Funds
	2005	2005	2006	2006
Program Expenses				
Contracts	\$15,000	\$0	\$12,700	\$0
Materials & Supplies	\$20,000	\$0	\$27,300	\$0
Subtotal: Direct Exps:	\$35,000	\$0	\$40,000	\$0
Administration	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0
Program Support	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0
Subtotal: Other Exps:	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0
Total GF/non-GF:	\$35,000	\$0	\$40,000	\$0
Program Total:	\$35,000		\$40,000	
Program FTE	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00
Program Revenues				
Intergovernmental	\$0	\$0	\$25,000	\$0
Other / Miscellaneous	\$35,000	\$0	\$0	\$0
Program Revenue for Admin	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0
Total Revenue:	\$35,000	\$0	\$25,000	\$0

Explanation of Revenues

The city of Portland contributes \$15,000 and Clackamas County contributes \$10,000. This year we have the potential to add more jurisdictions to the group which may lower our costs or allow us to send more people to the conference for the same investment.

Significant Program Changes

Given the current climate and challenges regarding diversity it is critical to maintain funding for this event. For many attendees this is the only external training they attend all year due to limited training resources in departments. Since many departments will have to further reduce training and professional development allocations, this event continues to be a very cost effective model for providing high quality training to our staff.