



PRESS RELEASE

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CSUSB entrepreneurial program receives federal grant to assist Coachella Valley small businesses

PALM DESERT, Calif. – Helping underserved existing and aspiring businesses in the eastern Coachella Valley is the target of a \$45,000 U.S. Department of Agriculture Rural Development Grant awarded to the Inland Empire Small Business Development Center, a program of the Inland Empire Center for Entrepreneurship at Cal State San Bernardino.

The grant was announced on Tuesday, Oct. 11, at the CSUSB Jack H. Brown College of Business and Public Administration with USDA Rural Development Undersecretary Lisa Mensah and USDA Rural Development California State Director Janice Waddell in attendance.

Mensah called the grant to the IESBDC “special” as the agency primarily offers loans programs, with limited grant funds available.

“We are largely lenders, so it’s always special when we’re announcing a grant,” Mensah said. “But I know how important programs like our Rural Business Development Grant are to unlock the greater potential of private finance, and I know how critical these funds are to help businesses get to a next level, where then they can be borrowers and add the employees that make sense.”

Mensah praised the center and CSUSB for their commitment to helping underserved businesses.

“No business thrives on its own. Business is the most connected field you could be in. In order to make a market you have to know what it takes,” Mensah said. “We are so proud to be partnered with institutions who understand their role as springboards.”

The grant will help provide Coachella Valley small businesses with technical assistance to help them improve and enhance their ability to take advantage of market opportunities, financing options and management training to create greater success in the market place, said Vincent McCoy, IESBDC executive director.

“Our goals are to get more money, more resources and more confidence in business operation to those who need it through counseling and training that will be delivered from a local IESBDC

office,” McCoy said. “Our focus will be education and outreach so that the recipients of the center’s services will become aware of USDA resources, be prepared to seek funding for their business projects, and leverage IESBDC technical assistance to develop effective business strategies, create financial projections in support of loans and create jobs, sustainable business models and become bankable.”

As part of the grant, the IESBDC will partner with Get In Motion!, a company that provides Spanish language outreach and training to individuals, small businesses and entrepreneurs to start, maintain and expand their businesses. Founded in 2011, Get In Motion! will work with clients in east Coachella Valley.

The center will also offer workshops for general information on a topic that include:

- Small Business Financing – exploring various sources of capital including conventional, USDA, SBA guaranteed, micro-loans and alternative financing for existing and start-up businesses.
- Marketing – focusing on developing research and strategy for successful marketing efforts and will include fundamentals and social media marketing.
- Feasibility and Business Planning – helping business owners understand if the planned investments in existing or startup business have merit and are worth pursuing. This is valuable for determining if an idea and the related execution make sense.

The center will work in conjunction with local agencies such as chambers of commerce, city economic development agencies, the Coachella Valley Women’s Business Center and the USDA to make people aware of products and services available.

For more information on USDA Rural Development visit <http://www.rd.usda.gov/ca>.

For more information on the Inland Empire Small Business Development Center, visit <http://entre.csusb.edu/content/inland-empire-small-business-development-center>.

For more information on the Inland Empire Center for Entrepreneurship, contact Michael Stull at (909) 537-3708 and visit <http://entre.csusb.edu>. For more information on the Jack H. Brown of College of Business and Public Administration, visit <http://cbpa.csusb.edu>.

Located in beautiful Palm Desert, the CSUSB Palm Desert Campus offers bachelor and master’s degrees, a doctorate degree in educational leadership, and teacher credentials and certificates. With more than 1,400 students, it is the only four-year public university in the Coachella Valley and plays a vital role in educating and training the region’s growing population.

For more information about the CSUSB Palm Desert Campus, contact Mike Singer in the campus’s Office of Public Affairs at msinger@csusb.edu or (760) 341-2883, ext. 78107 or visit the campus website at www.pdc.csusb.edu.