Rural Development Initiatives (RDI)

Capacity Building and Rural Economic Vitality
RDI Overview

• Formed in 1989 as part of the Oregon Economic Development Department

• Privatized as an Oregon based non-profit in 1991

• Building the capacity of rural leaders, community groups and collaborative partnerships

• Moving this capacity to Rural Economic Vitality (REV) action
Oregon Rural Development Council

• Formed in 1991
• RDI’s role, bringing council to rural communities
• The Golden Years; 1992-2000
• Rural Oregon Day, Policy Forums
• Rekindling the ORDC
RDI Services

• Leadership Development
• Rural Economic Vitality (REV)
• Networking
Leadership Development

• Rural Futures Forum (RFF) 1992-2002

• Ford Institute Leadership Program (FILP) 2003
Overview

• Signature program of RDI in partnership with the Ford Institute for Community Building

• Initiated in spring 2003

• RDI has designed and delivered the program in 86 community hubs in Oregon, California and Walla Walla
Overview

• More than 5,000 graduates of the program

• 20+ Communities participate in the training each year

• The Ford Institute Leadership Program is delivered over five plus years

• Designed to engage more people in the community each year
Ford Institute Leadership Program
Series of trainings

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Curriculum Highlights

• Appreciative Inquiry: Discovering Community Successes
• Skill Based Leadership with Project
• Community Development Models: Asset Based Community Development, 3E’s
• Understanding and Working with Stakeholders
• Project Design and Action Planning
• Resource Development
• Engaging Stakeholders
Skills and tools

• Working in groups
• Effective meetings
• Managing Conflicts
• Decision making process
• Working with Volunteers
Participation & Attendance

- Cohort sizes range for 25-35
- Sessions are held in the communities
- Meet Friday afternoon and Saturdays
- One Weekend per month over 4 months
- Project completed in one year
- RDI provides ongoing support and follow-up
Rural Economic Development (REV)

- Economic Vitality Summits
- Learn By Doing
- Pasos al Exito (PAE)
- HomeTown Competitiveness (HTC)
- WealthWorks Northwest (WWNW)
Economic Vitality Summits

• Day long, locally organized
• Exploring promising practices
• Topics have included: Revitalizing Downtowns, Buying and Investing Locally, Capitalizing on Tourism, Renewable Energy, and HomeTown Competitiveness
Learn By Doing

• Developing Funding Proposals
• 20 hours of curriculum
• Session Topics include: Positioning Your Org, Project Planning Tools, Budgeting, Evaluation, Site Visits and Pitching Your Project
Pasos al Exito (PAE)

• Financial Literacy Training
• Starting a Home Based Business
• Networking, Technical Assistance and Resources to Launch and Sustain Your Business
Hometown Competitiveness (HTC)

- Developed in the Midwest by Heartland Center for Leadership
- Four Pillars: Leadership, Philanthropy, Entrepreneurship, and Youth
- Treasure Valley in Oregon and Idaho
WealthWorks NorthWest

• Builds on Assets
• Collaborative Impact
• Links businesses and community orgs in a value chain
• Strengthens Eight Capitals: Financial, Built, Intellectual, Individual, Social, Natural, Political and Cultural

• Local Ownership and Control
Networking

Regards to Rural

• Inform, Inspire and Celebrate
• 450 practitioners and rural leaders
• More than 50 sessions
• Regards to Rural IX, June 25-27, Riverhouse in Bend
Thank you...

...for keeping your rural communities vital!
Craig Smith
Executive Director
Rural Development Initiatives
www.rdiinc.org
503-789-4745
craigsmi@rdiinc.org