PROGRESS REPORT: Minority Business and Leadership

Objectives
To expand Extension and Outreach programming focused upon Latino-centered business and community development

Funding Awarded $141,293

Funding Expended to Date $6,199.45

Progress to Date
Utilizing the funds, a field specialist position was created to focus upon Extension and Outreach programming related to Latino and minority community and business development. The search produced a finalist who was hired to start in October 2012. Dr. Jose Amaya, former assistant professor of English and Latino Studies and corporate diversity officer of HyVee, was the successful candidate. He is based out of the Town/Craft facility in Perry, Iowa.

Dr. Amaya has focused on learning the various responsibilities and duties of the position from Himar Hernandez, who formerly covered all of Iowa in this job. They have begun program planning by splitting the “territory” into Western and Eastern Iowa, with Dr. Amaya taking the western part of the state. He has begun making contacts with our Latino constituency, the Iowa State University Extension CED staff, and local community partners in Perry and Western Iowa.

Programmatically, Dr. Amaya has begun working with four communities — Perry, Clarion, Webster City, and Hampton, Iowa — on delivering EXITO EN EL NORTE coursework during April 2013. This program in Spanish was co-developed by ISU Extension and Outreach to help introduce new immigrants into Iowa and the United States by providing education as to accessing basic services. The set-up for these programs has required phone, email, and in-person consultations, along with technical assistance, and the development of additional educational material such as questionnaires for prospective participants. He also is working with requests from the cities of Ames, Hampton, and Sioux City for diversity and inclusion training; this has required that Mr. Hernandez focus primarily on community integration strategies with an overall goal of strengthening Latino engagement within communities.

Additionally, the development of diversity and inclusion program materials is predicated upon a need for city staff training. Developing partnerships and collaborations with appropriate agencies, associations, and organizations are already helping Mr. Hernandez deliver targeted leadership and organizational development programs to the staff, constituents, and members of each community.

Dr. Amaya also is assisting three Latino-owned and one non-Latino businesses in conducting needs assessment activities and implementing innovative ways to meet clients' needs and develop business plans.

Next Steps
Dr. Amaya and Mr. Hernandez will be working to develop a diversity-training curriculum for communities. They also are looking for ways to update the EXITO EN EL NORTE curriculum and DVD series.