

ATTACHMENT A – ABSTRACT

Work Ready Oklahoma (WRO), a program of It's My Community Initiative (IMCI), delivers evidence-based solutions that are aligned with workforce needs to empower long-term unemployed (LTU), other unemployed, and incumbent workers throughout Oklahoma (OK) to succeed in a globally competitive environment. The state faces an acute shortage of workers in middle and high skilled industries/occupations for which local employers are using H-1B visas to hire foreign workers, yet in 2014, more than 22,000 Oklahomans have been without work for at least 27 consecutive weeks.

IMCI, a proven Department of Labor grantee and workforce intermediary, will apply a multi-regional approach to help American workers rapidly regain employment or advance along career pathways. Our three training tracks—Direct Placement, Short-Term Enhancement, and Long-Term/Intensive—are tailored to help close the gap between available jobs and appropriately trained workers seeking employment. Program efforts will be supported by a primary partnership—including the Workforce Investment System of OK (OK Employment Security Commission and regional Workforce Investment Boards), education and training providers, and workforce intermediaries—as well as a robust network of employers, industry associations, and other key partners. With a strong track record of recruitment, assessment, and job placement for unemployed individuals, IMCI understands the unique barriers that LTU workers face and is committed to providing supportive and specialized participant services to help them overcome challenges and achieve career success.

IMCI will serve 600 individuals through WRO, and at least 85 percent of these workers will have been unemployed for 27 weeks or more. Among those enrolled in education and training activities, a projected 75 percent or more will complete these activities. Partners will meet on a quarterly basis to share feedback about the program and lessons learned, and program strategies will be refined accordingly to ensure participants receive the maximum benefit.

- 1. Lead Applicant Name:** It's My Community Initiative (IMCI)
- 2. Lead Applicant City/State:** Oklahoma City (OKC), OK
- 3. Primary Partnership Entities:** *Workforce Investment System:* OK Employment Security Commission (OESC); Central OK, South Central, Southern, Southwest OK, and Tulsa Area WIBs;
Training Provider(s): Metro Tech, Oklahoma City Community College, Rose State College, University of Central Oklahoma, Oklahoma Christian University; *Business-related Nonprofit Organizations, Consortia of Businesses, or Business:* Public Strategies, Black Chamber of Commerce of OK
- 4. Areas Served by Grant (by city, county, and state):** Oklahoma (statewide)
- 5. Total Funding Level Requested:** \$10,000,0000
- 6. Project Name:** Work Ready Oklahoma (WRO)
- 7. Summary of Program Activities and List of Credentials to be Awarded:** WRO provides integrated services leading to associate, bachelor, and master degrees and Industry-Recognized Credentials in H-1B occupations. Components include start-up activities; recruitment; assessment; education and training; supportive/specialized participant services; job placement and retention; and performance management.
- 8. Populations to be Served:** Long-term unemployed (85%), other unemployed, and incumbent workers
- 9. Targeted H-1B Industry(s)/Occupations:** Management; Business and Financial Services; Education, Training, and Library; Architecture/Engineering; and Computer/Mathematical
- 10. Required Employer Partner(s):** 3Nines Technologies, Buy For Less, Continental Resources, JUMP Technology Services, OKC Public Schools, OK Society of CPAs, OK State Home Builders Assc., Tapstone Energy, W&W Steel
- 11. Additional Key Partner(s):** Accel Financial Staffing, Goodwill Industries of Central OK
- 12. Public Contact Information:** Sandino L. Thompson, IMCI Executive Director, (405) 418-3921, sandino.thompson@itsmycommunity.org