



Applied Technology Project Overview White Paper, CBED Report 04-06-005

This is one of a series of White Papers on issues of interest to the Center of Business and Economic Development (CBED) and the ESU School of Business. Each White Paper summarizes readings, analysis and synthesis by the Director, William L. Smith, Ph.D., for discussion, to provide background information to direct our planning processes and to build content for the Center web site at:

<http://www.emporia.edu/business/ibed/center/>

We are building a "Rural Entrepreneurship and Applied Technology (REAT)" program here in the School of Business at Emporia State University.¹ A program must be built, put together, piece by piece, over time, through a series of projects. The first project in this program, of course, is to put in place the foundation, the four phases of the REAT Project² itself. The second project has been presented as The Flint Hills Triangle Project.³ This paper presents the fundamental conceptual basis for the third (and for now, final) project, Applied Technology.

We currently envision three activities as part of this project which, cumulatively, will provide a working definition of "applied technology" for us as we move forward on each of the other projects and the program. These three will be briefly described here as: (1) our partnering with the Flint Hills Technical College (FHTC) on business creation activities; (2) our partnering with faculty and staff of the Biological Sciences, Library Information Systems and other ESU entities; and (3) partnering with community entities working toward creation of some kind of business incubator (probably "without walls") activities.

Let us now look at each of these in just a little more detail:

Partnering with the Flint Hills Technical College on Business Creation Activities

This activity was actually begun with two meeting in the Spring Semester of 2004. The result was a list of over 30 students at ESU and FHTC who had actively participated in discussions and expressed a desire to continue to work toward finding synergies between the technical skills of students at FHTC and business skills of students at ESU to create new business opportunities.

¹ See CBED Report 04-06-002, "Rural Entrepreneurship and Applied Technology Program Overview White Paper," for additional background information.

² See CBED Report 04-06-003, "Rural Entrepreneurship and Applied Technology Project Overview White Paper," for additional background information.

³ See CBED Report 04-06-004, "Flint Hills Triangle Project Overview White Paper," for additional background information.



It is anticipated that these activities will continue in the Fall Semester of 2004 leading to the development of some specific business plans. These plans will then be evaluated with regard to future potential.

Partnering with ESU Entities

Business creation ideas can come from any source; some of the best ideas frequently come from the most unexpected places. For that reason, the REAT Program, through this project, intends to be proactive in identifying some of these “unexpected places.” Two activities have already been identified and others will follow.

The first is the Biosciences Business Group that has been identified this summer to actively seek involvement for ESU with the Biosciences Initiative of the Kansas Economic Growth Act signed into law by Governor Sebelius on April 19, 2004. Fifteen faculty members in the Biosciences have been identified and have been formed into an Ad Hoc Biosciences Business Group, with Bill Smith from the School of Business and Director of the Center for Business and Economic Development (CBED) as the coordinator of the group. They plan to exchange emails, keep current on the statewide initiative, and meet periodically to plan strategies and activities of common interest to ESU.

A similar set of activities will be initiated with the Library Information Systems faculty and staff. An exchange of emails has taken place, and there is interest to be built on. This will be pursued during the Fall Semester of 2004.

Other faculty research and service groups will be identified as the project moves along, gets publicity, and successes are achieved.

Partnering with Broader Community Entities

Many community activities already exist with goals to “grow our own” businesses in the community. These exist in every county, city and town in the area. Some are more effectively organized for success than others. Most have fairly narrow and specialized interests and audiences. Most operate in isolation for the others, for these very reasons. Research will be undertaken under this project to inventory these activities and to identify where efforts by this project will be most effective.

One major, nationally recognized type of activity that does not exist in the local community is any type of business incubator. This concept will be examined to determine if this is one of the activities that would be worth the effort to pursue.



Conclusions

Many opportunities exist to take existing technologies, and through innovation and application, create new business opportunities to create wealth in the community and add high-skill, high pay jobs to the local economy. This project is dedicated to seeking out more of those opportunities and exploiting them.