

# Workforce Investment Board Of Merced County

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Rick Osorio, Chair  
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September 17, 2001

Rural E-Commerce Program  
Division of Science, Technology & Innovation  
200 East Del Mar, Suite 302  
Pasadena, CA 91105-2551

To Whom It May Concern:

This letter is in support of the E-Commerce Program proposal being submitted by the City of Los Banos, in collaboration with Merced College. The Westside is experiencing the most rapid growth in Merced County, and there is a serious need for job development, workforce training, and industry to match the rate of residential development.

Many of the newcomers to the Westside are commuters to the Silicon Valley. They are seeking local employment and many would like to start their own businesses. However, they lack the technical training and business expertise to get started. Increased availability of educational and business support services could give these residents a jump start.

The Workforce Investment Board (WIB) serves all of Merced County, through provision of services such as the Worknet Employment Resource Center (One-Stop Delivery System), Younger and Older Youth Year Round Youth Development Programs, basic skills computer labs, Registered Nursing and Licensed Vocational Nursing educational programs, and a Building Trades Pre-apprentice program. Dr. Anne Newins, representing Merced College, one of the lead partners in this proposed project, is a member of the WIB. She is familiar with the complex labor market and economic problems facing the region.

Merced College is concurrently seeking funding from the WIB to help support the proposed Innovation and Technology Center. The Center will provide services to a myriad of groups: 1) K-12 students, 2) Adults seeking technical training, and 3) Specific businesses in need of customized training. Services would include advanced computer applications and electronics training, training in small business development and management, and linkages to local support agencies.

A combination of funding from your agency, the City of Los Banos, Merced College, and the WIB would provide for a much more comprehensive program. Consideration of this proposal will be considered by the WIB sometime early next year. The justification for requested funds will first be considered by our Youth Council with their recommendations forwarded to the full Workforce Investment Board.

If the City of Los Banos is successful in receiving funding from the Rural E-Commerce Program, the WIB is committed to providing all allowable services to eligible individuals and businesses.

Sincerely,

Rick Osorio  
Chairperson  
Workforce Investment Board of Merced County

*"Preparing people for today's jobs and tomorrow's careers."*

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