

CONTESTANT CAPACITY

1. Organizational Background

The [Chemeketa Community College Small Business Development Center](#) (SBDC) has been serving the business community of Marion, Polk, and Yamhill counties since 1983. The Chemeketa SBDC's work focuses on those interested in starting businesses as well as established small business owners who are looking to strengthen their businesses, make them more profitable, or take them to the next level. In 2016, the SBDC held classes for 184 potential start-ups and provided over 1,600 counseling hours to 309 businesses. The businesses the Chemeketa SBDC worked with during 2016 created 161 jobs, saw an increase in sales of over \$11 million, and received \$1.2 million in capital investment.

In 2016, the Chemeketa SBDC worked with the Oregon Department of Corrections (ODOC) to provide business training and advising to the participants of the Oregon State Penitentiary's Hobby Shop program as well as participants of Santiam Correctional Institution's pilot Business-in-a-Box program. Participants learned about start-up issues, marketing, business planning, taxes, and financial planning. While not formerly incarcerated, the participants were working toward creating a strong foundation for themselves upon release. The SBDC continues to provide resources and support to these programs.

Marion County is home to several ODOC facilities including [Oregon State Penitentiary](#) (OSP), [Oregon State Correctional Institution](#) (OSCI), [Santiam Correctional Institution](#) (SCI), and [Mill Creek Correctional Facility](#) (MCCF).

According to ODOC, in 2016 there were nearly 1,300 individuals released from prison or jail in Marion, Polk, and Yamhill counties. Marion County alone had 918 individuals released into the community, the third largest behind Multnomah (1,665) and Washington (1052) Counties which are much more populated counties (as much as two times the population of Marion County). The Chemeketa SBDC recognizes the needs of returning citizens and the importance of actively serving this population.

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2. Background of Management Team

Celia Nùñez

Celia Nùñez is the Director of the Chemeketa SBDC. Celia has accumulated years of project management, financial administration, and leadership skills working in the private and public sector. She is a multi-faceted leader offering 25 plus years of experience in entrepreneurship and business ownership, as a training expert, in community relations and staff management. She is a visionary and strategic thinker, seasoned manager, and recognized change agent. As an experienced and talented business development manager, she has continuously focused her efforts on strategically positioning businesses for growth by securing funding, developing strong public policy, specializing in small business finance and new business development. She is well known for building a strong community and business relationships in Marion, Polk and Yamhill Counties, has the ability to communicate across multi-cultural audiences, and strategically market programs and ideas.

Joanne Scharer

Joanne Scharer is Business Advisor at the Chemeketa Small Business Development Center. In working with clients, Joanne has a particular focus on start-up issues, assisting business owners in the development of business plans and loan packages, and business coaching for established businesses. Joanne worked with the Hobby Shop and Business-in-a-Box Programs at Oregon State Penitentiary (OSP) and Santiam Correctional Institution (SCI) respectively. She conducted 10 hours of live training at OSP and 3 hours at SCI while also providing one-on-one advising via Telmate. Joanne has a particular interest in reentry issues and has participated in Marion County's reentry volunteer training. Finally, Joanne is also a business owner herself

working as a freelance writer, editor, and project manager.

ENTREPRENEURIAL EDUCATION DELIVERY SYSTEM

1. Participant Recruitment Plan

The Chemeketa SBDC plans to recruit and identify potential participants for entrepreneurial training and access to microloans through outreach, referrals, and screening. Outreach will consist of presentations to referral partners and their constituencies, informational posts on social media, and press releases. The Chemeketa SBDC expects our already committed referral partners to be the main source of recruitment and screening due to the fact that they are already working with returning citizens, would have an idea of what individuals might be a good fit for the Aspire Challenge, and the Chemeketa SBDC would know that those individuals are already receiving much needed support. These partners include:

- [MERIT](#) A close partner of the Chemeketa SBDC that works with underserved populations and has experience working with formerly incarcerated individuals
- [Union Gospel Mission](#) A non-profit that provides transitional housing to formerly incarcerated individuals
- [Marion County Reentry Initiative](#)
- [Mid-Willamette Valley Community Action Agency](#) Operates the De Muniz Resource Center, providing assistance with education, employment, housing, basic needs, and other information and referral, including financial literacy workshops, legal clinics, GED preparation, support and advocacy, parenting and cognitive behavioral classes.
- [Polk County Community Corrections](#)
- [Yamhill County Community Justice](#)
- [Home for Good](#) An award-winning program of ODOC based on a statewide network of faith and community-based volunteers and organizations working together so that support and services can be effectively used to ensure successful transition of offenders from prison to the community.
- **Business-in-a-Box** program at Santiam Correctional Institution
- Parole and probation offers in the Chemeketa SBDCs service area (Marion, Polk, and Yamhill counties)
- [Chemeketa Community College Corrections Education Program](#)
- [Worksource Oregon](#)

The Chemeketa SBDC will conduct additional screening based on personal readiness and commitment to participation. The Chemeketa SBDC will interview each potential participant to determine if the individual understands the expectations of the training and is in a position to take the appropriate next steps.

2. Classroom Instruction

Based on our experience providing entrepreneurial training to start-up entrepreneurs for 34 years, as well as recently at the Oregon State Penitentiary and the Santiam Correctional Institution, the Chemeketa SBDC has a proven, existing intensive entrepreneurship education curriculum that can easily be expanded and/or customized to most benefit formerly incarcerated individuals. The base curriculum (introduction to self-employment, financial feasibility, start-up issues, rules and regulations, business planning, marketing, access to capital) will be augmented with financial literacy components offered by the OSU Federal Credit Union, leadership training offered by Celia Núñez and goal setting and personal development training offered by Scott Sadler, another Chemeketa SBDC advisor for eight years and business owner for over 20 years. In addition, the Chemeketa SBDC will consult with our Aspire Challenge advisory group and referral partners to see what supplemental material would be critical to include.

The Chemeketa SBDC will hold entrepreneurial training for two cohorts per funding year (participants who are not prepared to enter the first cohort will have priority for the second cohort). These trainings will run for 8-10 weeks. Each class session will build upon the previous session and class assignments will follow suit so

that at the end of the course the participants will have completed a business plan. During the course of instruction, participants will explore the start-up process, business strategy, access to capital, marketing, human resources, leadership, contracting, and market/product development. In addition to classroom instruction over 8-10 weeks, the SBDC will provide supplemental online resources for market research, as well as additional self-directed online learning on accounting, business planning, and social media.

All of the business advisors and instructors at the Chemeketa SBDC are either current or former business owners. This is by design so that advisors and instructors can model the task and challenge of entrepreneurship as well as relating to those we serve.

3. Mentoring

In addition to regular one-on-one advising with business advisors at the SBDC, the SBDC will provide individualized support to participants by recruiting existing SBDC clients to serve as mentors for participants. The Chemeketa SBDC will also make every effort to recruit business owners who are also formerly incarcerated to participate as guest speakers and/or serve as mentors. In order to connect participants with the local business community, the Chemeketa SBDC will also hold an open house where participants can meet other SBDC clients, other business owners, and network with community members who can be a positive influence.

The Chemeketa SBDC believes in supporting entrepreneurs throughout the life of their business, from start-up to exit, regardless of their history or experience. The SBDC will continue to be available to participants after the instructional periods of the two cohorts. No later than one month after the instructional period, the Chemeketa will follow up with participants at least quarterly for at least two years to track progress and provide assistance as needed.

In addition to entrepreneurial mentoring, the Chemeketa SBDC recognizes that the needs of those reentering our community are vast and often complex. With this in mind, our referral partners will also be a source for potential mentors to help participants explore their personal interests and visions. For example, the [Marion County Reentry Initiative's Inspire Program](#) connects individuals who are reentering our community after incarceration with volunteers who can help them learn new skills and interests that will assist them in their successful reentry. Another option for mentoring support includes Resource Navigators from [Polk County Family & Community Outreach Department](#), these individuals work with individuals who face barriers due to a criminal history.

4. Community Connections

The Chemeketa SBDC is fortunate to be located within a community that understands the need for and importance of providing reentry support to formerly incarcerated individuals. In addition to being referral partners, a number of organizations in our three county service area are well equipped to increase participants' financial literacy, access to transitional services, and other social support that improve the economic well-being of the returning citizen. Together, the Chemeketa SBDC and our community partners ensure that participants are well equipped with support services to help them navigate the opportunities and challenges of reentry and entrepreneurship. For participants not already connected with community partners, the Chemeketa SBDC will provide referrals to these organizations. To encourage early connections, representatives from SBDC's community partners will participate in the first class of each cohort. The Chemeketa SBDC will continue to make connections with appropriate organizations based on the needs of and feedback from participants.

The Chemeketa SBDC is excited about the Aspire Challenge opportunity and what the SBDC can contribute to an important community issue. Beyond the training provided for the two cohorts over the year, the SBDC will also work with our partners to consider the sustainability of this work. We will work with an advisory group

as soon as we receive the Aspire Challenge award and convene this group quarterly to help us address unforeseen issues and needs while also helping us create a sustainable program that can be embraced by community organizations in the future.

ACCESS TO CAPITAL

1. Access to micro-lending

The first step to accessing capital is personal and financial readiness. The Chemeketa SBDC will work with participants to assess their readiness and provide resources to help increase this readiness (e.g., consumer credit counseling, budget planning, savings plans, etc.). The financial literacy training provided during classroom instruction will also help participants create a strong foundation for understanding their financial needs, goals, and behaviors. Ultimately, the way one manages one's personal finances spills over into how they manage their business finances. The Chemeketa SBDC wants to make sure this spillover is positive and productive.

The Oregon SBDC Network (OSBDCN) has a [Capital Access Team \(CAT\)](#) that focuses specifically on access to capital for small businesses, including micro-lending. Joanne Scharer is the Chemeketa SBDC's CAT representative and has successfully assisted 14 businesses in obtaining loans and microloans (including the Oregon Entrepreneurial Development Loan Fund) for a total capital infusion of nearly \$1.1 million. In addition to this experience, the Chemeketa SBDC is connected with [Micro Enterprise Services of Oregon \(MESO\)](#), an SBA intermediary lender, which offers loan products that are particularly suited to returning citizens (e.g., credit building loans). MESO also offers Individual Development Accounts (IDAs) which are also a good option for returning citizens to access capital as well as increasing their financial literacy. MESO is excited about working with the Chemeketa SBDC and is in full support of our work with the Aspire Challenge. [MERIT](#) (Microenterprise Resources Initiatives and Training), another one of the Chemeketa SBDC's partners, also offers IDAs and is ready to work with the Chemeketa SBDC in connecting participants with this resource. Other potential micro-lending opportunities include the [Oregon Entrepreneurial Development Loan Fund](#), [Community Lending Works](#), and [Oregon's Community Public Offerings](#).

2. Connection to capital and funding opportunities

SBDC will help participants be prepared to meet with capital providers. The [OSBDCN Capital Access Team \(CAT\)](#) offers "Financing Your Business Future" public workshops throughout the state. These workshops explain the 5C's of credit, explore different sources of capital (traditional and non-traditional), touch on the considerations for crowdfunding and working with local investors, describe what it takes to get funded by lenders and investors and identify local resources that help small business get projects funded. These workshops also include a networking lunch to allow businesses to connect and network with capital providers. The Chemeketa SBDC will include a similar workshop for Aspire Challenge participants during each cohort. The workshops provided will take into account the particular needs of returning citizens and include capital providers that are a good fit for participants in addition to those that might be a good fit in the future.

Aside from making capital and funding opportunities available during the instructional period of each cohort, the Chemeketa SBDC will be available to participants whenever they are ready to pursue funding. Part of our sustainability plan is to make sure each participant knows the Chemeketa SBDC is part of their success plan and is a resource to them while they are participating in the Aspire Challenge as well as years from now when they are successful business owners.