

New Mexico

Northern New Mexico College's NNMC University Center

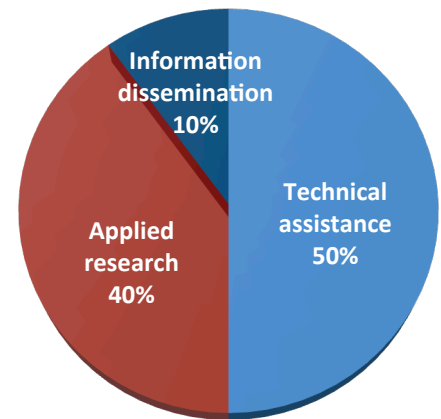
NNMC University Center

The University Center at Northern New Mexico College (NNMC) provides technical assistance and applied research activities that support capacity building for economic and workforce development in north central New Mexico, a largely rural and disadvantaged region that is home to a number of Native American pueblos and tribes. The Center's activities focus particularly on increasing opportunities for higher-skill and higher-wage jobs in the region through the development of value-added sectors that build on existing capabilities and industries.

Activities

NNMC University Center offers a variety of technical assistance and applied research services that support workforce and industry development in key sectors. The major focus has been on business plan development, advisory committee development, and other applied research to support creation of new programs in Career Technical and Heritage Arts fields. These fields include automotive technology, construction trades,

cosmetology, hazmat sciences, Rio Grande-style weaving, fiber arts, Spanish Colonial furniture, and so on. The Center has provided extensive support, including business/marketing planning, to the Sostenga Center for Sustainable Food, Agriculture, & Environment, which aims to preserve and expand the agricultural/cultural-based opportunities and benefits in small farming communities. It has supported military skill realignment



efforts through business planning for NNMC's Veteran's Green Jobs Academy. To date, the Center has partnered with others to initiate five new training/certification programs that directly address technical capacity and workforce development. These programs will support increased

University

Northern New Mexico College

Center Director

Camilla Bustamante

Center Location

Outreach Unit

Center since 2004

Center Activities

- Applied research
- Technical assistance
- Workforce development
- Information dissemination

Clients

- Students
- Regional residents
- Native American tribes/pueblos
- Veterans

Assessment Techniques

- Client interviews
- Case studies
- Program staff feedback

Contact Information

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employability and entrepreneurship opportunities for the region's population. A variety of other applied research activities conducted by the Center have addressed topics such as an economic impact study for NNMC; re-purposing of a historical, rural satellite campus of NNMC; and development of a Solar Research Park and Academy (and related career pathways/training).

Leveraging

NNMC University Center depends

upon a broad array of partnerships to advance its Career Technical and Heritage Arts program development initiatives, including partnering with the regional development corporation, the regional university consortium, and other organizations in relevant fields (e.g., Espanola Fiber Arts Center, Spanish Colonial Heritage Society, Plumbers & Pipefitters Union, and many others). Other key partnerships include the on-site Small Business Development Center, tribal

development corporations, the North Central Economic Development District, and the Los Alamos National Laboratory. The Center also leverages data resources, analytical expertise, and student labor, and specialized equipment from within NNMC to deliver its programs and services.

Success

Technical assistance to bring value-added to a traditional agricultural sector

NNMC is located in a predominantly rural region where the majority of jobs are in low-paying and seasonal service and agriculture industries. To address this challenge, the NNMC University Center provides technical assistance to programs that build upon existing assets to identify and expand higher wage/skill opportunities for the region's residents. One major target of this technical assistance has been the Sostenga Center for Sustainable Food, Agriculture, & Environment – a nonprofit, student- and community-based program that preserves regional agricultural/cultural heritage and promotes value-added food

production. The Center's assistance to Sostenga has included developing and implementing business and marketing plans to launch the center, providing technical assistance in areas such as regional farming and cooperative marketing, and building collaborations with community members to support knowledge transfer and a broader impact. As a result of the Center's technical assistance and collaboration, the College developed a new environmental science baccalaureate degree (much needed by regional employers) and launched a new health food production company (providing new higher-skill jobs) and two local natural food cooperatives.

Through its continued targeted

technical assistance and capacity building activities, NNMC University Center is supporting the transformation of the region's rural, agriculture-based industry toward value-added production and higher-skill job opportunities, while simultaneously preserving the region's unique food and cultural heritage.