

**2003 NATIONAL CUSTOMER SERVICE AWARDS PROGRAM**

Nomination Entry Form

**I. IDENTIFICATION INFORMATION**

State Workforce Agency: Polk Works ( Polk County Workforce Development Board)

Name of State Contact: Mr. Dave Sims

Title: Operations Director

Address: 205 East Main Street, Suite 107, Bartow, Florida, 33830

Telephone: 863-519-0100 ext. 123

Fax: 863-534-8501

E-Mail: dave\_sims@polkworks.org\_\_\_\_\_

Name or signature of State Administrator approving the nomination:

\_\_\_\_\_

**II. GENERAL INFORMATION**

Name of Program/Project Nominated: Polk Works Community Health Initiative

Nomination Category

(Check only one. Use a separate form for each nomination entered.)

Innovation – Architect of Change

Collaboration – Pyramid

Tools and Technology – Compass

Professional Development/Capacity Building – Building a World-Class Workforce

**Excellence in Serving Business – Prism**

Month/Year Initiated: **June 2001 – on-going**

Is the nomination for: **local program**

If local, please provide the name of the locality: **Polk County, Florida**



#### IV. SYNOPSIS (Narrative Section)

##### a. The basic service(s) provided by the nominated program/project. –

There were several objectives associated with this project. They were:

- **Objective 1:** establishment of a significant stakeholder coalition to address the critical workforce needs of the healthcare sector.
- **Objective 2:** conduct labor market research related to the targeted industry in order to determine sector need for training, ability to effectively address workforce issues and willingness to participate in subsequent sector implementation activities.
- **Objective 3:** identification of specific target populations for participation in subsequent sector training activities.
- **Objective 4:** develop a comprehensive strategic plan to address workforce needs and improve human resource utilization in the healthcare industry.
- **Objective 5:** provide analysis of the capacity of local training providers to address the needs of the healthcare industry.
- **Objective 6:** identification and dissemination of promising workforce practices within the targeted industry to companies in healthcare.
- **Objective 7:** develop a healthcare implementation plan that will define specific activities and responsibilities for meeting the current and future workforce needs.
- **Objective 8:** production of information and materials that will lend themselves to replication of this project throughout the workforce development community.

##### b. The outstanding accomplishments/successes. –

Most of the project activity and the sectoral focus have been on increasing system capacity as it relates to healthcare- specifically nursing and allied health care programs in Polk County. Health care institutions are the largest and fastest growing employers in Polk County. Recruitment, retention and training of employees is a major problem. As a result of these activities several measurable and positive outcomes have occurred.

These include:

- Partnering and financial commitment from local hospitals to assist Polk Community College to essentially double the number of nursing seats.
- Development of Interactive Technology Based Courseware for Licensed Practical Nursing to increase the number of trained Registered Nurses, Licensed Practical Nurses, Nursing Aides, and Orderlies in Polk County.
- Establishment of the Collegiate High School Allied Health program at Polk Community College.
- Targeting of youth with healthcare information and career opportunities to assist them in making informed career choices.

c. **The reason(s) the nomination should be considered for a national award.** – This project demonstrates the positive outcomes that can be achieved when key stakeholders are brought together to address vital community issues.

**V. CRITERIA INFORMATION (Narrative Section)**

a. **Project Basis –**

On June 26, 2001, Polk Works Workforce Development Board (PWDB) was awarded a USDOL Sectoral Employment Demonstration Grant for \$69,111 to address the critical workforce needs of our local health care business sector. **Since then this small grant has resulted in a broad-based community effort to address health care issues in Polk County whose success is evident in \$ 1,906,463 in funds and in-kind resources leveraged by this initiative.** Accomplishments include private funding support to increase the capacity of local nursing programs, scholarships for health care occupations and new educational opportunities in the health care industry for youth.

**b. Project Operation –**

Polk Works' partners include: : *Polk Community College (PCC) and the Polk County School Board Technical Centers, The Polk County Health Department and the Polk County Medical Association The Tampa Bay Partnership, the High Tech Corridor Council and Workforce Florida, Inc., Florida Association of Homes for the Aging, and all major local hospitals*

Two healthcare summits were held to identify and discuss ways to improve the supply of healthcare workers in Polk County. Over 200 community leaders and healthcare professionals attended health care summits February 14 -15, 2002 and on June 21, 2002 to identify and discuss promising workforce practices within the healthcare industry.

Senior staff of Polk Works were also intensely involved in working with Polk Community College's Allied Health Care Council. A significant result of the Polk Community College's Allied Health Care council was the commitment by local hospitals to provide funding for a nursing recruiter and 30 nursing scholarships annually for the next three years. This funding is estimated at \$994,000 over the next three years. It will essentially double the number of nursing graduates over that period.

Project activities focused on achieving qualitative success by benchmarking best practices and networking with successful agencies, regionally and nationally, to be aware of successful practices. Polk Works has networked with numerous workforce regions regarding best practices of health care programs. In state and out of state examples include: There is ongoing contact with Mary Peña, Executive Director and Clay Howell, Director of Occupational Development about the best practices of the highly successful San Antonio QUEST project and with Eduardo F. Garcia, Project Manager of the Delaware County Health Sector Employment Intervention Project.

## **b. Project Operation – (contd.)**

Trips were made to the Boston sectoral healthcare project and Project Quest (San Antonio). We were particularly interested in the Boston experience with the USDOL Incumbent Health Care Worker Training Collaborative Demonstration project. Similarly the approach taken is the Project Quest staff to identify labor market needs was impressive. The approach taken by Project Quest in meeting community healthcare issues has been shared with all of our local partners.

## **c. Use of Award Funds –**

If awarded the Prism Prize we would reinvest these funds into expanding our system capability in another critical healthcare area – specifically long term care and the training of Certified Nursing Assistants (CNAs) to meet critical labor shortages. Recent state legislation has exacerbated this problem. We would use these funds as “seed-money” to start a CNA Training Academy and seek additional funding from the several long term care facilities here in the county. Ultimately our goal would be to establish a 501 (c) 3 not for profit corporation that would train CNAs for all long term care facilities here. Project activities that generate “best practices” will be shared with our local, regional and national partners.

## **c. Project Results –**

We believe that this project is an outstandingly successful example of a service delivery strategy serving a critical business sector. The results achieved below were possible because of the collaboration throughout the project with business leadership in all facets of planning and execution.

- Local funding (\$34,178) was used to fund a staff position for Polk Community College’s Collegiate High School Allied Health and Medical Academy. Through this unique program high school students can earn their high school diploma and work towards an Associate of Science degree in four healthcare related areas: Nursing, Radiography Technology, Occupational Therapy Assistant and Physical Therapy Assistant. The US Department of Education provided \$500,000 in funding for this project over the next three years. Polk Community College is providing approximately \$212,000 of in-kind support over this same period. It is expected that the Collegiate High School will seek charter school status shortly.
- Polk Works will continue to fund periodic convenings of healthcare and community leaders to continue the dialogue on the needs of the community. (Current budget for Workforce 2020 is \$98,250) This will occur through our Workforce 2020 group which is Polk Works’ major outreach tool to employers. Healthcare issues as they impact employers have been and remain a top priority.
- Community awareness was sharpened with the attendance of over 200 community leaders and healthcare professionals attended Health care summits in February and June, 2002 to identify and discuss promising workforce practices within the healthcare industry.

#### **d. Project Results – (contd)**

- Polk Works will award 15 scholarships to Class of 2003 High School Seniors who are interested in entering a Health Care Occupation. (\$42,000) In an effort to address the critical need for skilled health care workers, these special program awards students with a college scholarship for a 2-year degree program preparing the student to enter a health care field. Students will be able to achieve an A.S. degree in a health care occupation, such as nursing, paramedics, emergency medical service, health information technician, radiological technologist, physical therapy assistant, or occupational therapy assistant.
- Healthcare information and career opportunities in the industry were included on the new Polk Works CD ROM for youth. (\$26,000) This is being distributed to all high school students in Polk County.
- As noted above, and most significantly, local hospitals agreed to provide funding for a Nursing recruiter and 30 nursing scholarships annually for the next three years. This funding is estimated at \$994,000 over the next three years. It will essentially double the number of nursing graduates over that period.