



Leaders at the Core of Better Communities

2015 Local Government Excellence Awards Program Program Excellence Awards Nomination Form

(All programs nominated must have been fully operational for a minimum of 12 months, prior to January 31, 2015)

Deadline for Nominations Extended to March 30, 2015

Complete this form (sections 1 and 2) and submit with your descriptive narrative.

SECTION 1: Information About the Nominated Program

Program Excellence Award Category (*select only one*):

- Community Health and Safety
- Community Partnership
- Community Sustainability
- Strategic Leadership and Governance

Name of program being nominated: Meniffee University

Jurisdiction(s) where program originated: City of Meniffee, CA

Jurisdiction population(s): 85,000

Please indicate the month and year in which the program you are nominating was fully implemented. (Note: All Program Excellence Award nominations must have been fully implemented for at least 12 months prior to January 31, 2015, to be eligible. The start date [on or before January 31, 2014] should not include the initial planning phase.)

Month: October Year: 2013

Name(s) and title(s) of individual(s) who should receive recognition for this award at the ICMA Annual Conference in Seattle, Washington, September 2015. (Each individual listed MUST be an ICMA member to be recognized.):

Name: Rob Johnson

Title: City Manager Jurisdiction: City of Meniffee

Name: Scott Mann

Title: Mayor Jurisdiction: City of Meniffee

Name: _____

Title: _____ Jurisdiction: _____

SECTION 2: Information About the Nominator/Primary Contact

Name of contact: Gina Gonzalez

Title: Sr. Management Analyst Jurisdiction: City of Menifee

Street address: 29714 Haun Rd

City: Menifee State/Province: CA

Zip/Postal Code: 92584 Country: USA

Telephone: 951-672-6777 Fax: 951-679-3843

E-mail: ggonzalez@cityofmenifee.us

City of Menifee- Menifee University Established October 2013

The Challenge

Faced with the loss of Vehicle License Fees (VLF) in the City of Menifee, which would have assisted in hiring additional staff to provide services within the city is very bleak at its best. With the loss of around \$4 million dollars annually, from VLF being stripped by Governor Brown, it has proved to be very challenging trying to provide a full range of quality services to over 46.8 square miles with only 45 employees (less than one employee per sq mile in a city that has one of the largest terrains in the county). For a city to stand out and become recognized as a unique and attractive employment opportunity, which is highly important in the attempt to capture high caliber and qualified seasoned applicants for the city's workforce. Doing so is very costly and has become more and more difficult especially when extra capital is not available to do so. It is very important for cities to capture seasoned employees, especially when staffing levels are low, to more efficiently provide quality services to residents.

Many employees within municipal government recognize a limited ability to grow and promote internally within the compounds of city government, making advancing a thing of the past. In order for employees to feel satisfied in what they do and who they do it for, municipal government's only real option is to continue to grow employees internally and keep their attention at their current place of employment with cross-sectional development. This allows for the investment of the employee to be garnered by the investor-the city. Even so, with cross sectional development there will be a plateau that will be reached in realizing upward mobility internally and that realistically it isn't attainable.

Program Implementation/Cost

City Management decided to do something completely different and team up with local partners to come up with a unique opportunity with a local University or education system. City Management decided to address this problem and came up with a program that would allow city employees to grow professionally and personally, and assist the local University with potential clientele. From the brainstorming session with the college, the City created “Menifee University,” where “knowledge plus leadership” meet. Brandman University, is the city’s only four-year University in Menifee and they would work with the City Management to develop workshops or courses specifically designed to enhance the workforce at the city, while also positioning the workforce for upward mobility positions. Additionally, since there isn’t room for advancement the continued intellectual growth would allow for advancement that other municipal governments could offer.

Additionally, City Management created a survey with the help of Brandman University to gauge what the curriculum needs were of the current workforce. It was determined that “leadership” needed to be addressed in order to effectively address customer service issues within city hall and to effectively change the culture of “typical” government. In fact, by focusing on leadership, employees also would be gaining the tools in order to effectively communicate with our constituents and difficult customers within the city. For the city, this meant defining how we wanted to present information that was twofold 1) assisting the city by addressing internal issues and 2) provide professional growth and development that would be meaningful to the employee. Brandman University took this information and created a program with the City that

at the end of each series, the employee would obtain a certificate that could be used for their professional portfolio.

The first class of Menifee University addressed Leadership and featured issues such as: 1) What is Servant Leadership; 2) Serving others focused on organizational leadership and addressing a new paradigm in serving customers, and constituents from a Servant Leadership perspective; 3) Effective Business Communication and dealing with difficult people; Using the DISC Management Leadership tool to address who we are as individuals and analyzing those around them and how to effectively communicate with them by using DISC; how to continue your personal and professional growth and then bringing it all together through the art of graciousness.

These courses were all lead by adjunct professors from Bradman University during a Lunch and Learn Series, during lunch time for an hour, where employees would bring their own lunch and acquire valuable tools for growth. Each series focused on a new topic identified in the survey over a year's span of time. The Leadership series occurred bi-monthly. At the end of the program the certificate is presented to each employee for completing certain tasks: attendance was required at all the courses, and so was participating in writing prompts. Additionally, there were recommended readings from each course and these books were purchased by the city. The City created a physical internal library for employees to check out and borrow to assist with their development and education.

Furthermore, City Management also created a digital library with articles pertaining to management, finance, budgeting, technology etc. that would be helpful in growth and

development at their own individual pace. This was an additional perk of *Meniffee University* in providing employees with an additional tool that was affordable to shape or develop employees with up-to-date information that is innovative, effective, low cost, and also helped to expand employee's knowledge base as a form of continuing education.

In exchange for Brandman University's services, the city offered the University an ad spot in *Meniffee Matters* publication, which is the city's glossy newsletter that is produced and sent to every home in Meniffee three times a year. The exclusivity of being offered this ad spot is only reserved for Brandman and 2 other partners for different projects. This was a large value to Brandman and an opportunity that otherwise would be considered very costly to them. This partnership allowed Brandman the opportunity to appeal to residents in the city for enrollment, but also showed residents that they are vested in the Meniffee community, which in turns benefits the city long and short term.

Outcomes/Lessons Learned

The program has been extremely successful. We have been able to incrementally survey the program and make appropriate changes as needed based off of the input from employees. We have garnered around 20 employees at every course, which accounts to close to 50% of our city workforce. In addition, Brandman University has increased their enrollment by over 50% in one years' time through the City's partnership. A recent survey sent to staff showed that employee satisfaction has increased, and costs for expensive trainings and staff development have decreased by 20%. In addition, we have been able to create a Human Resource Brochure listing

all the added benefits for new employees looking to make Menifee their choice for employment.

The lessons the city has acquired through this process, is that leveraging partnerships and having the vision and open mind to connect with partners can have a beneficial and large lasting effect such as community engagement benefits, increased quality of services being provided, and strategic priorities are obtained awhile simultaneously cutting wasteful costs.