



# Proposal

## Oahu WorkLinks Pathway Out of Poverty Grant Support

Revision 1

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# **Bricks-n-Books Project Hawaii Job-Readiness Training Program**

## *Green Job-Training Pathway Out of Poverty*

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### **1. STATEMENT OF NEED**

Developed by National Bricks-n-Books Project, Inc. (Nat'l BnB), the Bricks-n-Books Project is an alternative secondary education job-readiness training program designed to serve eligible at-risk youths (men and women) ages 16 and older, as well as other disadvantaged persons working toward their GED credential, while learning an occupational skill in green construction, manufacturing, and other high-demand green industries. The program also provides a strong emphasis on soft skills, leadership development, and entrepreneurship. With an added emphasis on ongoing program sustainment, all participants are automatically enrolled in the Bricks-n-Books Labor Pool (BnB Labor Pool), where they become available for gainful employment by local employers on a fee-per-hour basis.

#### **Why At-risk Youth and Other Underprivileged Persons?**

The National Center for Education Statistics (NCES) says the dropout rate for 16 to 18 year olds between 1972 and 2004 was just over 10 percent, resulting in total dropouts of nearly 3.8 million (more than 170,000 annually), out of 36.7 million high school students. In addition to a number of negative outcomes, dropouts also are less likely to be in the labor force than those with a high school credential or higher, and are more likely to be unemployed if they are in the labor force (U.S. Department of Labor, 2005).

In Hawaii, according to recent studies, there are close to 30,954 high school dropouts over the age of 25 in the state, which nearly equaled the total number of unemployed in Hawaii (35,705 – with about 15,400 on Oahu alone in 2007. Based on the 2006 per-capita median income of \$33,767 for Hawaii County in that year, the number of unemployed Hawaiians

represented a total unrealized taxable income of about \$1.03 billion annually. Needless to say, this dollar amount does not account for the annual costs associated with the social systems that are necessary to sustain the unemployed. Clearly reducing the number of dropouts or otherwise assisting existing dropouts to obtain their GEDs, as well as providing them with access to social resources, would provide a foundation for future higher education, better prepare them for gainful employment, and increase state tax revenues.

### ***Ex-Offenders in Search of Training for Green Jobs***

Customized hard skills job training for ex-offenders that leads to licensing, certification, and employment in green jobs with livable wages and respectability is an effective strategy for addressing both Hawaii's economic development and public safety priorities. In support of the sustainable energy agenda, Bricks-n-Books Project Hawaii (BnBPH), Nat'l BnB's Hawaiian Affiliate, will enter into strategic partnerships with carefully selected organizations in Hawaii, seeking to bridge the gap in understanding environmentally sustainable economic growth and the advancement of "green collar jobs" that promote renewable energy projects and employment opportunities for ex-offenders and individuals re-entering the workforce. BnBPH also will provide ex-offenders with viable career paths out of poverty to sustainable living.

According to the University of Hawaii (UH) in 2008, the Hawaiian prison system was home to 9,101 inmates, compared to an average of 8,000 enrolled in its 10 college campuses. That translates into the highest rate of all races incarcerated; 23% of the population, representing 47% of the known offenders, and 37% of current inmates. They also represented 30% of all homeless and 28% of all welfare recipients.

Overall, without serious intervention, two thirds of newly released individuals will commit new crimes and return to prison within three years, according to the U.S. Department of

Justice. The recipe for despair consists of a poor education and few employable skills, coupled with few prospects for employment, barriers to public housing, difficulty obtaining a driver's license or even voting. However, a new focus on green jobs skills training and workforce development for new (and/or re-tooled) markets and industries offer hope for ex-offenders to gain industry-specific skills, certification, and an advantage in the economy.

***Overview of Current Economy and Workforce***

Adding insult to injury for at-risk youth and ex-offenders, the current economic crisis has contributed to the loss of millions of jobs across the country. According to the table below, entitled “Employment and Growth, 2008-2010, State of Hawaii,” the number of unemployed in Hawaii has increased an additional 2.8% (19,270) across all industries. As is generally the case, at-risk persons, ex-offenders, and others on the low-end of the economic curve are less likely to realize opportunities that will enable them to participate in an economic recovery and be elevated above their pre-crisis status.

<b>TABLE 1 – Industry Employment and Growth, 2008-2010, State of Hawaii</b>					
<b>Industry</b>	<b>3rd Qtr.</b>		<b>Growth</b>		
	<b>2008</b>	<b>2010</b>	<b>Net</b>	<b>Percent</b>	
Total, All Industries	680,630	661,360	-19,270	-2.8%	
Natural Resources & Mining	6,970	6,350	-620	-8.9%	
Construction	37,410	31,710	-5,700	-15.2%	
Manufacturing	14,830	14,200	-630	-4.2%	
Trade, Transportation & Utilities	116,430	112,910	-3,520	-3.0%	
Information	9,670	9,280	-390	-4.0%	
Financial Activities	29,290	28,220	-1,070	-3.7%	
Professional & Business Services	75,030	73,210	-1,820	-2.4%	
Education & Health Services*	123,360	126,020	2,660	2.2%	
Leisure & Hospitality	106,620	101,230	-5,390	-5.1%	
Other Services	25,060	24,970	-90	-0.4%	
Government*	74,490	74,710	220	0.3%	
Self-Employed and Unpaid Family Workers	61,490	58,540	-2,950	-4.8%	

\*State Education and Hospitals are excluded from Government and included in Education & Health Services. Total may not add due to rounding to the nearest ten.

The most promising occupational group in terms of positive growth will be education, training, and library with 2.5 percent growth over the two-year period, representing 1,120 more jobs. Nine of the occupations in this group ranked among the top 20 fastest growing occupations. They were in the postsecondary or special education areas. The second-fastest growing occupational group is community and social services, with 2.4 percent projected growth (or 260 jobs). Four of those occupations placed in the top 20 fastest growing occupations, mainly counselors, social workers, and assistants. Three other major groups are forecasted to experience positive growth: healthcare support; healthcare practitioners and technical; and life, physical, and the social sciences.

The remaining 17 major groups are all expected to show a decline. Construction and extraction occupations are the only groups with a projected double-digit drop, forecasted to decrease by 11.9 percent over the 2008-2010 periods. Construction will lose 5,240 jobs over the two-year period. Clearly, this decline can be attributed to the downward spiral of the housing market that has become defined as a culprit in the currently economic crisis now facing America.

### ***Green Jobs in Search of Skilled Labor***

In spite of these significant declines in employment, which is forecasted to continue over the coming years, the passing of the federal American Recovery and Reinvestment Act (ARRA) has created opportunities for persons to be trained in career fields that are viable for the foreseeable future. With the signing of ARRA, President Obama has outlined an aggressive national agenda to reduce carbon emissions, increase the production of renewable sources of energy, improve energy efficiency in public buildings and private homes, and expand “green collar” employment opportunities for individuals and families in poor, disadvantaged, and

disconnected communities.<sup>1</sup> Included among these opportunities are energy-efficient building, construction, and retrofit industries; the renewable electric power industry; the energy efficient and advanced drive train vehicle industry; the biofuels industry; deconstruction and materials use industries; the energy efficiency assessment industry serving residential, commercial, or industrial sectors; and manufacturers that produce sustainable products using environmentally sustainable processes and materials.

While there will be some job opportunities related to retrofitting government buildings and making private homes more energy efficient, the expectation that large weatherization projects occurring in Hawaii is impractical. This is due the fact that Hawaii enjoys year-round climate conditions of around a pleasant 85 degrees, with an occasional tropical storm. Consequently, we believe that job opportunities in “green construction” will be limited to projects influenced primarily by the sun, wind (i.e., energy efficient windows, solar and wind turbine manufacturing and installation), and water (e.g., power). We also believe that because of basic and soft skills training, participants that successfully complete our program will be better able to qualify for other opportunities with added post-secondary education at a local community college or trade schools. With the financial assistance obtained from this proposal, the Nat’l BnB seeks to participate in the Green Job Training program by offering job-readiness training to at-risk youth and other disadvantaged persons, thereby creating opportunities for gainful employment in many of the green energy industries that are now beyond their reach.

## **2. PROJECT MANAGEMENT AND ORGANIZATIONAL CAPACITY (See Part III, Supporting Data, Bricks-n-Books Bios)**

### *Staff Capacity*

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<sup>1</sup> Introduction (page 1) - Aligning Environmental, Tax, and Workforce Development Policies to Create a New Green-Collar Workforce; Presidential Transition; 2008 ICF International, Inc.

During the first year of this two-year program, the management of Bricks-n-Books Project Hawaii will be the shared responsibility of Samuel C. Harrell, the developer of the Bricks-n-Books Project, and Joe Wilson, who is instrumental in bringing the program to Hawaii. In his dual role, Mr. Harrell will take the lead in assuring comprehensive program compliance with program operational and grant requirements, while Mr. Wilson will focus more closely on the administration of the affiliate as well as the planning, development, and implementation of individual programs, which must be tailored to meet the particular needs of program participants. Working together, Mr. Harrell and Mr. Wilson also will be responsible for implementing all programs developed by Nat'l BnB within the community in collaboration with community and business partners.

Mr. Harrell's professional background prior to developing the Bricks-n-Books Project includes more than 25 years as a test engineer and project manager on several large government contracts where he was responsible for multiple contracts valued well over \$8 million. As an entrepreneur over the last two decades, he owned and operated three successful small businesses through which he developed an appreciation for how commercial and social enterprises can be linked for the greater benefit of people and communities. Mr. Wilson has spent more than 14 years in the social services field, working for the *Department of Health and Human Services*, where he served as a mental health therapist and in community development with various non-profit organizations in Oahu. His work includes adult mental health clients, including the homeless, unemployed, substance abusers, and ex-offenders. He received his undergraduate degree in exercise and sports science, with an emphasis in teaching and coaching, from Brigham Young University-Hawaii.

Supporting Mr. Harrell and Mr. Wilson will be Ms. Theresa Beckley, whose primary focus will be community affairs and development. Ms. Beckley (previously, Theresa Bigbie), has extensive experience in higher education administration, having served as associate dean and director for the Division of Continuing Education at the Brigham Young University-Hawaii for 18 years, from 1987 to 2005. Her community service has involved working closely with surrounding community leaders whose towns were impacted by the growth and development of her community.

In 2001 to 2009, Mrs. Beckley served on the board of directors of Hawaii Reserves Inc., a land management company for the Mormon Church. Beginning in 2006, she worked for three years for the Office of Hawaiian Affairs, serving as director of Hawaiian governance. In this position, she worked on behalf of the beneficiaries of Hawaiian ancestry in exploring several governance options for Hawaiians to manage and oversee their own assets in the state of Hawaii.

Also supporting BnBPH will be Nat'l BnB's core management group, operating under the direction of Mr. Eric Williams, Nat'l BnB's president. Mr. Williams brings more than 20 years of design engineering and project management experience in the automotive industry to the organization, and he oversees daily operations of the national organization. Other key members of the management group include Mr. Doug Wagner and Mr. Terry Saran, two construction trades specialists with more than 70 years of combined experience. We also benefit from the 50-plus years of combined experience of Mr. Sam Harrell Jr., the founder's son, and Dr. Carole B. Ricotta. As a program director for several nonprofits, Sam Jr. has worked on several government projects for close to two decades, during which time he was commissioned by the DOL/ETA to write "*Guidelines for Starting a Workforce Development Program.*" Dr. Ricotta is a seasoned

educator with a background as a school principal in Colorado, a school superintendant in Oregon, and an adjunct professor at the University of Phoenix, Colorado Springs campus. Dr. Ricotta is the developer of the Bricks-n-Books curriculum framework, which includes the assessment, instruction, and outcome methodologies.

Nat'l BnB will also be supported by members of its board of advisors (BOA) with many years of collective experience in areas directly related to education administration and community development and relations. Among these are Ms. Shelley Kais, a workforce developer with more than 20 years' of experience in adult learning and training, and Mr. Grant Bright, a leadership development and team building professional with more than 40 years of experience.

In addition, we have a strong professional staff, operating in collaboration with Oahu WorkLinks, which is considered central to Nat'l BnB and its Hawaii Affiliate's overall and long-term success. Nat'l BnB is committed to supporting Oahu WorkLinks as the lead applicant for the Pathway Grant in Hawaii. Oahu WorkLinks is a consortium of city, state, and private agencies focused on implementing the mandates of the federal Workforce Investment Act in the city and county of Honolulu. Oahu WorkLinks serves employers and job seekers; providing job training, resume writing workshops, job applicant matching and more. A one-stop system of seven job centers around Oahu enables job seekers to easily access information and training services to meet their employment needs. Other collaborative partners will include labor unions, community colleges, public schools, and other training service providers, many of whom are also associated with Oahu WorkLinks, offers opportunities for further independent collaborations.

***Fiscal, Administrative, and Performance Management Capacity***

As the lead applicant for this Pathway of our Poverty Grant, Oahu WorkLinks will provide fiscal management, which will include budgeting and accounting support for all collaborative partners. Oahu WorkLinks is responsible for development of the organization's annual budget, from initial planning to final approval of stakeholders. Among these duties are the monitoring of all program spending and payment of bills for travel expenditures, equipment, and commodities; timely deposit of receipts, including disbursement of funds to affiliates; filing necessary budget, program performance, and expenditure reports with the state and federal agencies, and maintaining fiscal records for audit and review.

In its efforts to monitor program performance, the National Bricks-n-Books Project has identified the TraxSolutions System, by nFocus, as its primary system for program management, performance control, tracking and reporting, and outcome management. TraxSolutions software provides unequalled ability to capture and manage important data in many areas (including case management and performance management). TraxSolutions has been proven to increase the efficiency of day-to-day operations and improve the efficacy of programs and services. Specific advantages of TraxSolutions include the ability to:

- ensure compliance and accurate reporting to funding agencies
- improve data integrity, accuracy, and security,
- measure impact at the individual, organizational, or enterprise levels,
- analyze trends and respond quickly to changing needs.

With TraxSolutions, we will have the ability to accurately measure the effectiveness of our programs and services and make adjustments in real-time; thereby, better assuring that the organization and its participants reach their goals.

### ***Experience of Applicant***

In addition to the collective experiences of our staff, two key members of the management team have closely-related expertise to the proposed project. In 2003, Mr. Samuel C. Harrell, founder of Bricks-n-Books Project, and Dr. Carole B. Ricotta developed a partnership with the Urban League of the Pikes Peak Region to develop a supplemental education program that was ultimately approved by the state of Colorado. This program ran for three consecutive years and served two of the state's largest districts (Denver Public School 1 and Colorado Springs District 11). The partnership served more than 200 students, grades 4 through 8, with positive outcomes reported. Stakeholders who benefited from the project included, at a minimum, students, teachers, parents, the school districts that contracted our services, and the community at large.

Crucial to the strategic program plan, initial program deployment, staff training, and ongoing program quality is Sam Harrell Jr. A member of Nat'l BnB's advisory board, he serves as director of special projects for the Greater Philadelphia Urban Affairs Coalition (GPUAC). Mr. Harrell brings more than 17 years of experience in organizational development, programmatic compliance monitoring, and targeted capacity building to the project. He is an expert in the area of reentry, having been a senior program officer for the highest performing sites in a national demonstration project and in providing consultation around conceptualizing and designing replicable approaches to the reentry crisis in this country. Mr. Harrell also has served as an adjunct professor in Eastern University's master of nonprofit management degree program, teaching *Advanced Fundraising* to the next generation of nonprofit leaders.

### **3. STRATEGY AND PROJECT WORK PLAN**

With a specific focus on construction and manufacturing and related industries, BnBPH will educate participants to qualify for employment by training them in a wide range of related skill sets, with a focus on energy efficiency. Recognizing that participants in our program will likely

have a wide range of educational, social, and behavioral shortcomings, Bricks-n-Books is committed to helping them tap into their desire for self-improvement through educational advancement and gainful employment. Some of these issues will include, but will not be limited to, such challenges as criminal records, gang affiliations, single parent-households, and drug and alcohol abuse. Whatever the challenge, Bricks-n-Books is committed to assisting participants in finding the solutions necessary for success in the program and in life.

Outcome measurement, data collection, and performance monitoring are crucial aspects of our work as a job-readiness training service provider. Our overall program plan includes a process of regular meetings for monitoring program performance against stated objectives, benchmarks, and/or specific deliverables. Central to this process will be the TraxSolutions system, which will be used to assure we are on track with our goals. Our approach includes, at a minimum, monthly staff meetings (more frequently if necessary) around a work plan that is focused on how we are doing individually and as a collective in achieving the goals of the program plan. This is called a “work plan”, which:

- Defines the specific actions/tasks that will lead to goal accomplishment.
- Divides work into short-, mid- and long-term actions/tasks.
- Clarifies who is responsible for each task.
- Sets a due date for task completion.
- Identifies the resources and/or materials needed to carry out each task.
- Needs to be monitored and updated regularly.

The Bricks-n-Books Project's program plan includes: a) Participant outreach and recruitment, b) Intake, c) Case Management, d) Job Training, Job Development and Placement, e) Curriculum Development, and f) Job Retention.

### ***Roles and Level of Commitment of Partners***

As program director, Mr. Wilson will be engaged full time on the project. Initially, Ms. Beckley, the director of community affairs, will be required to commit 75% of her time to helping engage the community in support of the program in Hawaii. After four months, Ms. Beckley's time will be reduced to 25%, during which time she will serve a liaison with collaborative partners, providing feedback to assure program quality. Other staff includes an office administrator, fiscal manager, program developer, and director of instruction who will work closely with program trainers, whether internally staffed or outsourced.

Nat'l BnB is committed completely to Bricks-n-Books Project Hawaii. Specifically, Samuel Harrell, Bricks-n-Books founder and the corporation's CEO, will spend 100% of his time in direct support of the Hawaiian operation for the first year, reducing to 75% in the second year. Mr. Williams, Nat'l BnB's president, will spend 50% of his time in support of the operation throughout the performance period of this grant. Nat'l BnB's curriculum developers, Dr. Ricotta, Mr. Wagner, and Mr. Saran, will each provide support equal to 25% of their time, initially, providing teach-the-teacher support, with an additional 20% of ongoing professional development support to the Hawaiian project's staff. Initially, Sam Harrell Jr. will spend 80 hours during the first month providing professional development training and support to the staff, reducing to 24 hours a month for the balance of the program performance period.

The level of commitment of each local collaborative partner is stated in each letter of commitment (LOC), which is found in Part III, Attachment Technical Proposal.

## ***Recruitment/Enrollment***

Recruitment is a major part of maintaining any program because it is the first performance benchmark. As a result, recruitment and outreach become a major role for all staff members. BnBPH will seek to enroll and train 390 participants per year over the two years (780 total) of this grant period. Working with Oahu WorkLinks (DOL One Stop Career Center), Leeward Community College, the Hawaiian Office of Community Services, and several other community partners, BnBPH will both actively recruit individuals and receive referrals.

The Bricks-n-Books Project has a unique way of recruiting program participants. Many men and women may fit the qualifications of the program, but this does not necessarily mean that they are capable of success in the program. The program has to fit the person's needs instead of the person fitting the program's needs.

Several factors contribute to successful recruitment and outreach:

- Ensure the potential participant is willing to participate in a classroom setting.
- Ensure the potential participant is ready to complete the individual goals set forth in their self-assessment for educational advancement and job placement.
- Ensure the potential participant is ready and willing to rebuild his or her image and skills through individual responsibility.

Enrollment will match the criteria of the participants who are served in the program.

## **Entrance Requirements**

- 18 years or older (Bricks-n-Books also offers services to persons as young as 16).
- Letter of recommendation (LOR) from community sources (high school counselors, criminal justice system, probation officers, etc.) obtained by prospective participants.
- Unemployed or under-employed due to the economic circumstances beyond their control.

- High school diploma/GED – if none exists, they must obtain it through the program.
- Current Hawaiian County residency.

### **INTAKE & ASSESSMENT**

Intake & Assessment is one of the most crucial units to the success of the program. If case managers do not assess potential participants properly, program retention will fall short.

Orientation for each cohort usually takes five days to ensure proper enrollment. A potential participant must reach all of these requirements before enrollment. Case managers use the following paperwork during intake and assessment.

**Intake & Assessment Application** - this form is used to obtain a preliminary history on the potential participant. It includes work history, academic background, address, phone number, etc.

**Locator Test** - The reading level from this test determines which test a potential participant will need to take. The three levels are: easy, medium, and advanced.

**Pre-Test** - the score of this test is used to determine what educational requirements the potential participant needs. Once the pre-test is graded, the outcome score will determine the track of the potential participant.

**Motivational and Physical Challenge** – this challenge is a test of will and body that demands mental, emotional, and physical re-training and re-construction. A potential participant learns how to operate in an environment other than that to which he is accustomed. The motivational physical challenge is a series of rigorous physical and mental obstacles that are meant to break a defiant mentality and reconstruct the character of the “warrior” (inside) who will obey authority, follow rules, and improve his behavior at home and in community life. The participants experience holistic therapy that begins the process of addressing underlying emotional or behavioral problems that may have been developing over many years.

## *CASE MANAGEMENT*

The Bricks-n-Books Project concept is premised on the assumption that all cases are not alike and, therefore, should not be subject to the same processing events and timetables. Some cases can be fast-tracked and promptly placed in jobs with little or no time needed for instruction and few intermediate events. Others require extensive character reconstruction or hard- and soft-skills training over the instruction period.

The case manager has an important job in ensuring the success of each enrolled participant. The information gathered and documented by case managers during intake determines training and timelines. They schedule legal consultations and interviews and distribute incentives. Even more crucial to program success, they determine additional required human services that may be needed as well as any extreme barriers to successful completion of program and retention (i.e. legal services, housing or addiction, driver's licensing).

## *TRAINING PROGRAM*

The instructional unit represents the core of the Bricks-n-Books Project. Participants go through a learning experience (educational component) followed by or concurrent with a hard skills green sector training experience that leads to certification that is supported by work-readiness services (soft skills training, life skills supports, case management, social services) and a job pipeline.

At an average cost of \$5,800 per participant, each participant will be exposed to 40 hours a week of instruction for up to 12 months, which includes: 1) 16 hours weekly of in-class GED instruction<sup>2</sup>, 2) 4 hours of leadership development, including community services, soft-skills instruction and entrepreneurship workshops, and 3) 20 hours weekly of occupational skills

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<sup>2</sup> Operating from the premise that not all cases are alike, when a participant obtains his or her GED they can make themselves more available for the Bricks-n-Books Labor Pool where they can seek employment.

instruction in home construction, both in a classroom setting as well as on-site through our BnB Labor Pool, where they will have the opportunity to put their knowledge to the test in real-world settings, while earning minimum wage.

Upon acceptance into the program, all participants go through an orientation where they receive a detailed handbook that outlines the program objectives, expectations, rules of conduct, and incentives/supportive services. In addition, participants receive a uniform (shirt), along with a journal to keep documentation of all activities throughout the program. Orientation includes an introduction to both soft skills training and industry specific skills in the green economy. The ability to find a job, keep it and grow with an organization, are generally more successful if participants are trained with certain skills (e.g., “hard skills”). Personal habits or traits such as dependability and conscientiousness can yield significant return on investment for an organization and for this reason; such soft skills are increasingly sought out by employers in addition to standard qualifications.

The curriculum is based on a framework that addresses everything from enrollment to instruction and post-program follow-up. Instruction will include business planning and management, focusing on, but is not limited to, basic estimating, licenses and permits, basic blue print reading, scheduling and planning, and communications skills (e.g., terminologies), as well as occupational safety training. On the trade’s performance side, the curriculum includes knowledge and usage of tools, including hand and power tools, with a specific focus on such skill-sets as framing, foundation installation, carpentry, layout, concrete, bricks and block, drywall, painting, electrical, etc.

While traditional trade principles will be taught, the program will also focus on defining and employing resources to accomplish green energy construction, as defined by the Leadership

in Energy and Environmental Design (LEED) Green Building Rating System<sup>1</sup>. Specifically, participants will learn the fundamentals and application of green building materials that represent suitable alternatives to traditional building materials.

The objective of the Bricks-n-Books Job Readiness Training Program is to challenge participants to learn these skills, while stimulating their interest to find enjoyment and satisfaction in construction or other related green energy fields. This begins with a training environment that treats all participants respectfully, while engaging them to also learn soft skills that will enhance their lives and the lives of their families. Versatility, adaptability, ingenuity, and reliability are keys to unlocking participants' minds and hearts to help them succeed.

### **Job Placement**

The BnB Labor Pool is a quasi-job placement service in which all participants are automatically enrolled. The BnB Labor Pool will work directly with the local One Stop Career Center(s) / WorkLinks and other agencies to provide participants opportunities for temporary or permanent employment, while still in the training. The objective of the BnB Labor Pool is to provide income opportunities for participants, and an additional funding source for the Bricks-n-Books Project. Throughout this process and even after the participant has exited the program, the TraxSolutions system will be used to help monitor job retention up to six month.

### ***Leveraging Resources***

In May 2009, Nat'l BnB began the process of seeking grants from foundations in the amount of \$550,000. While there are no guarantees, when and if these funds are made available, at least 30% (\$150,000) is planned for use in direct support of Bricks-n-Books Project Hawaii. Also included in that plan, Nat'l BnB will deploy the BnB Labor Pool in Hawaii, in which all participants of the program are automatically enrolled. This pool will be promoted to the local

community as an extension of Bricks-n-Books' non-profit operations<sup>3</sup>, from which a portion of the fees will be used to cover the costs of future enrollment and operations. Finally, as part of its ongoing fundraising initiative, Nat'l BnB will fully engage the eDOPT program, which is designed to create a steady stream of recurring receipts resulting from the credit card processing fees of local merchants. (See Part III, Attachment to Technical Proposal)

The combination of all of these resources can serve to off-set the cost of the program, as well as afford the program to enroll additional participants over the long-term.

### ***Project Work Plan***

The implementation of Bricks-n-Books Project Hawaii begins with the formation of collaborations with local organizations that, in many cases, may already provide the types of services (GED, occupational skills development, and soft skills) that will be offered by Bricks-n-Books. Such collaborations will strengthen not only Bricks-n-Books and collaborative partners, but the community at large. This speaks to the retention of existing resources, while extending access to persons who may otherwise be left underserved; our target audience of at-risk youth and others who are defined by the pathway solicitation to be served by this program.

Working with Bricks-n-Books Project Hawaii, Nat'l BnB's implementation plan includes three phases: immediate, near-term, and long-range:

**Phase 1 – Immediate (Program Setup):** After obtain initial funding, Nat'l BnB will gather all of its necessary corporate human resources in Hawaii in order to begin program setup.

Constituting an initial “Steering Committee,” the team assembled during the setup process will discuss the program in great detail during one week of initial meetings, which will establish

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<sup>3</sup> National Bricks-n-Books Project, Inc. is a registered 501 (c) (3) non-profit in the State of Arizona and, therefore, may be required to legally apply to do business as a foreign entity in other states where it otherwise may operate.

plans of action not clearly defined during initial planning. The attendees of these meeting will include Nat'l BnB and Bricks-n-Books Project Hawaii staff, local collaborators, including Oahu WorkLinks and other that provided letters of commitment during the grant-writing stage, and all other persons deemed relevant to the ultimate success of the project.

The critical evaluation for this phase includes a) clear and decisive understanding of all roles and responsibilities, to which all will commit contractually, b) acquisition of and training on outcome measurement systems, c) professional development training of staff, and d) a work plan that establishes additional actions necessary for moving forward to Program Startup, Phase 2.

**Phase 2 – Near-term (Program Startup):** Driven primarily by the energy efficiency concerns, the BnBPH work plan will include hiring and/or contracting job readiness trainers and/or facilities that will provide the training in accordance with grant commitments. Specifically, all persons hired by BnBPH will possess not only the requisite traditional skills of the targeted industry sectors, they will also be capable of teaching Green skills related to those sectors, whether it be construction, manufacturing or other career choices made by participants.

The critical evaluation for this phase includes a readiness to launch the program, including a) hiring the right staff to train our participants, b) outreach and participant enrollment, c) pre-assessment and case management, d) job-readiness training, including classroom and on-the-job training, and monthly team meetings.

**Phase 3 – Long-range:** Slated to begin in 2012, after a successful initial two-year program deployment in Hawaii, BnBPH will begin the Phase 2 process again, with a subsequent grant opportunity supported by other funding programs.

The critical evaluation for this phase includes a repeat of year one successes, with adjustments deemed appropriate to improve program performance.

#### 4. OUTCOMES AND DELIVERABLES

##### *Outcome Management*

From the beginning of program implementation, Bricks-n-Books will employ the TraxSolutions system, by nFocus; a tracking and reporting tool. This system will track program attendance of each participant from beginning of the program until the end; while monitoring the educational services they receive, as well as the cost of program services supported by the grant and report outcomes as they occur. This system will also report on the total number of participants who have completed the program, as well as the type of certification they receive upon completion. With a special focus on tracking post-program success, we will also monitor and report on the types and lengths of employment and/or post-secondary education programs that participants enroll in subsequent to program completion. Specifically, our program will seek to satisfy the following goals and objectives.

**TABLE 2 – PROGRAM GOALS & OBJECTIVES**

<b>Goals</b>	<b>Program Year (12months)</b>
<b>Enrollment:</b> 780 participants per two year period	780 persons enrolled beginning January 2010 within 20 cohorts, 39 participants each
<b>Enrollment Total: 780 persons</b>	
<b>Program Retention:</b> 85% of enrolled participants must complete program to be considered as a successful completion.	663 participants complete all phases of the program: intake & assessment, instruction, mentoring and case management.
<b>Program Retention Total: 663 persons</b>	
Job Placement: 65% of Participants retained in the program must be placed in jobs	431 participants are successfully placed in jobs above minimum wage levels with 50% of placements receiving health benefits as part of employment
<b>Job Placement Total: 431 persons</b>	
Job Retention: 50% of all placements must meet 6 months retention	216 participants retain their jobs for a minimum of six months.
<b>Job Retention Total: 216</b>	

In all cases, where appropriate and feasible, Bricks-n-Books Project Hawaii will partner with the Workforce Development Council division of the State's Department of Labor and Industrial Relations (DLIR). In addition to the above, the TraxSolutions system will enable us to collect and protect such personal and proprietary data as participants' social security numbers, for the purposes of enabling ETA to calculate employment history and other information for administrative use.

**Impact/Outcomes/Evaluation** – The evaluation process will involve two main strategies:

**Strategy 1:** During this time, Bricks-n-Books Project will evaluate inputs, outputs, and performance outcomes to gain an understanding of service efficiency and effectiveness with continual feedback loops for program adjustments when indicated.

Activity 1. Develop logic models and establish performance measures for initiative programs (e.g., intended outcomes, outputs, and inputs, key performance indicators of success).

Activity 2. Utilize data collection system, train staff on data collection system, and work with staff in determining reporting formats for results.

Activity 3. Develop and implement feedback loops as part of the comprehensive performance management system so that adjustments can be made when indicated.

**Strategy 2:** In summative fashion, examine the impact of program services on job placement, job retention, and other vital information (e.g., recidivism rates) among program participants.

Activity 1. Collect data on program components and employment outcomes.

Activity 2. Conduct bivariate, multivariate, and hierarchical-modeling analyses to assess the impact of program components (e.g., case management services, length of participation in programs and other components, staff/participant ratio) and individual characteristics (e.g.,

demographics, education level) on employment outcomes (e.g., job placement and retention) and recidivism rates (e.g., rate of ex-offenders re-incarcerated, as appropriate, per participant served).

Support our efforts to fulfill our outcome goals and objectives, BnBPH will utilize TraxSolutions' comprehensive performance management capabilities. TraxSolutions will enable BnBPH to evaluate the performance of each component part of its programs and allow those programs to be responsive to increased accountability standards. In addition to other duties, Theresa Beckley will oversee the collection and analysis of all data, including that which is identified under Strategy 2, above. Based on the above strategies, making use of the TraxSolutions and other data sources, she will also gather and report demographics and socioeconomic characteristics, employment history, services provided, and outcomes achieved.

### ***Appropriateness and Feasibility***

The feasibility of our program success in the community is determined on several levels. First we begin by performing a demographic assessment, which we have done. This sets the baseline from which to measure our success. Clearly there is a tremendous need among at-risk youths and other disadvantaged persons, many of whom desire gainful employment. Secondly, collaborations within the community are essential. Through our relationship with WorkLinks One-Stop, we will work with local community colleges, vocational schools, workforce development professionals, local industries, and labor unions that offer apprenticeship program resulting in certifications. Given the current economic climate, indicators are that virtually every institution of learning is looking for new enrollment, so we have and will continue to apply particular attention to forming collaborations with such organizations.

However, to be realistic about the feasibility of program success, we will also assess what the economic future holds as it relates to employment opportunities. This is true because of the

excessive layoffs that have occurred since early 2008, creating even more competition for the thousands of at-risk and other disadvantaged persons that reside in Hawaii. There are currently more than 19,270 newly unemployed persons in Hawaii, which has morphed conditions into an even greater economic problem that affects each and every resident of Hawaii and nationally.

Having established these facts, President Obama has optimistically committed his presidency to developing renewable energy sources as a way to improve our climate as well as the new jobs they promise to bring. When comparing Table 1, *Industry Employment and Growth, 2008-2010, State of Hawaii*, on page 5, with the 12 green industry-sectors identified in a research paper titled, *Greening of the World of Work: Implications for O\*NET–SOC and New and Emerging Occupations*<sup>ii</sup>, drafted by the Occupational Information Network (O\*NET), we find that several industries are more likely candidates to support renewable energy initiatives.

**Green Industry Sectors** – supporting our program focus, according to that research paper there will be crossover skill sets that can be applied to green energy sector industries, defined as O\*NET-SOC Occupations. There are a number of industries that are impacted by the green economy and identified as viable for potential new and emerging occupations within the green economy. These falls under one of three categories: 1) Green Increased Demand Occupations, 2) Green Enhanced Skills Occupations, and 3) Green New and Emerging (N&E) Occupations. During the intake process, the case manager will share these opportunities with newly enrolled participants as possible career paths that can be targeted with additional post-secondary training/education. Included among these are construction inspectors, manufacturing, government and regulatory administration, and others.

**Construction** – although the picture looks bleak for the construction industry at this time, there will be an increased demand for environmentally-friendly buildings. The literature on green

construction often cites the benchmark of a 35% reduction in energy consumption by existing commercial and residential buildings over the next three decades, which represents a financial incentive for “going green.” Many existing occupations will be classified as “green increased demand occupations,” with growth in employment related to green construction. That would involve occupational opportunities such as carpenters, electricians, cement masons and concrete finishers, and welders, cutters, and brazers, as well as construction managers, civil engineers, and construction and building inspectors.”

In all of these cases, there is an opportunity for entrepreneurship to be introduced. Operating from the premise that although the national unemployment rate is now more than 9.7%, commerce in certain sectors continues to take place. With this in mind, through its leadership development program, Nat’l BnB will teach interested program-participants how they can blend the occupational skills that they have learned through our program with their personal experiences and strengths to create thriving businesses, even in these difficult economic times. For example, although fewer new homes are being built, a home improvement service that retrofits existing homes to make them more energy efficient can be a very viable enterprise.

### ***Training Certifications***

As a minimum, each participant who successfully completes our job-readiness training program will receive a certificate of completion, a LEED certification, and other certificates offered by institutions of learning and labor unions with whom we partner. In all cases, Bricks-n-Books commits that through relationships developed with local employers, these certificates will translate into real job opportunities with employers.

### ***Suitability for Evaluation***

Nat'l BnB invites Oahu WorkLinks to evaluate its program results to assess whether programs meet its goal for which it can be used as a model of effectiveness, providing a basis for future program improvements and funding decisions. Using the TraxSolutions Outcomes Measurement system, Nat'l BnB will copy the Department or any outside evaluators it selects. This commitment extends to working with academics who are independent researchers qualified to conduct rigorous research.

### ***Why Fund Bricks-n-Books Project?***

The Bricks-n-Books Project is the culmination of an eight-year effort to develop programs that would assist persons in low-income communities to improve their lives through education that would better prepare them for more job opportunities. As a social enterprise, the program represents the best of a number existing successful programs, blended with new innovative business approaches that have been proven to work. In addition to the participants who successfully exit our program and become gainfully employed, the Bricks-n-Books Project's operational approach creates program sustainment, without dependency on long-term institutional funding support; a true financial and social return on investment (ROI).

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<sup>i</sup> For more details on LEED Certification <http://www.usgbc.org/DisplayPage.aspx?CategoryID=19>

<sup>ii</sup> For a copy of the O\*NET report and a listing of the identified occupations go to <http://www.onetcenter.org/reports/Green.html>.