

VOLUNTEER INFORMATION PACKET

MERIT Volunteer Opportunities

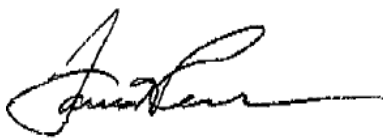
Thank you for your interest in volunteering with MERIT! Your skills and talents make a meaningful difference in the lives of community members starting a small business.

MERIT helps people explore, launch, and grow small businesses through training and support. Since its inception in 2004, the organization has helped over 560 individuals in Marion, Polk, and Yamhill counties explore entrepreneurship and start businesses. Over 90% of MERIT's clients are income eligible for free services and over 50% are women. We have also recently started offering services in Spanish.

MERIT has a great impact on the community. You can find MERIT businesses all over Marion, Polk, and Yamhill counties. To name a few: Journey's in Salem, My Mom's Basement in Monmouth, Ladies of Liberty in Independence, Shelly's Kid Child Care in Keizer, and The Bread Board in Falls City.

There is still tremendous opportunity for MERIT to grow its services and impact! In this packet, you will find a detailed program overview, volunteer job descriptions, and a volunteer application. We welcome the opportunity to work with you as we help our clients reach their business dreams. If you have any questions, please contact Kristen Mozian at 503-399-5088.

Sincerely,



Forrest Peck
Executive Director

www.merit-microenterprise.org



MicroEnterprise
Resources, Initiatives & Training

MERIT's founding partners:

Catholic Community Services
Polk Community Development Corporation
Salem-Keizer Community Development Corporation
Chemeketa Small Business Development Center

Chemeketa Center for
Business and Industry
626 High Street NE
Salem, OR 97301
(503) 399-5088/phone
(503) 581-6017 / fax
www.merit-microenterprise.org

MERIT PROGRAM OVERVIEW

What is MERIT?

MERIT is a 501(c)3 microenterprise development organization (MDO). It is housed in Chemeketa's Small Business Development Center.

What is a microenterprise development organization (MDO)?

A microenterprise is a very small business with 5 or fewer employees with startup financial needs typically less than \$35,000. Microenterprises are often started by people who have difficulty getting business training and credit, including low income individuals, minorities, immigrants, women, disabled persons, and welfare recipients. Many microenterprises are home based, but not all are. Typical microenterprises that MERIT has worked with are arts & crafts, specialty foods, child care, construction, landscaping, computer services, consulting, event planning, pet care, automotive repair, and consulting.

Why microenterprise?

Microenterprise development is a proven model to move people out of poverty. It is a relatively new phenomenon that has been around for two decades. The most comprehensive study on the effectiveness of MDOs is a 1999 Aspen Institute study. The study showed over a five-year period the majority of participants in programs around the country (similar to that of MERIT) increased family income by \$8,484 and household assets by \$15,909, 61% of participants decreased their reliance on public assistance, and 53% of participants moved above the poverty line.¹ SBA statistics show that after 2 years these very small businesses started by disadvantaged people survived at a higher rate than small businesses in general. Moreover, FIELD, a program of the Aspen Institute, surveyed 24 microenterprise development organizations in 2008 and found that each microenterprise employs on average 3.1 people including the owner and pays a median hourly wage of \$10.²

Who does MERIT serve?

MERIT serves individuals who have a clear, definite business idea, are in the very beginning stages of their business, or who want to move their hobby to the next level.

What does MERIT do?

MERIT offers Microenterprise Training in Marion, Polk, and Yamhill counties several times a year. The training helps the entrepreneur develop their business idea, prepare a feasibility plan, learn basic skills and tools for running a business, and provides the framework for developing a business plan. After graduating from the training, MERIT provides one-on-one technical assistance for two years. Through partnerships, MERIT clients have access to microloan programs, individual development accounts, legal services, and market research.

Are there any requirements for the Microenterprise Training?

The entrepreneur must attend a free orientation session to learn more about MERIT and to be screened into the training. Training participants must have one clear business idea, are ready to start their business, and are able to commit to all the trainings.

Is there a fee for the Microenterprise Training?

MERIT is open to anyone regardless of their income. MERIT is able to provide its services at a very reasonable price or at no cost to income qualified individuals due to the variety of funding support MERIT receives.

1) "Microenterprise Factsheet Series: Fall 2000." FIELD. 2000. http://fieldus.org/Publications/fact_sheet6.PDF

2) "FIELD Funder Guide: Issue 16, July 2010." FIELD. 2010. <http://fieldus.org/Publications/FunderGuide16.pdf>

VOLUNTEER APPLICATION

Volunteer with MERIT!

Name: _____
First MI Last

Mailing Address: _____
Address City State Zipcode

Email Address: _____

Work Phone: _____ Cell Phone: _____ Home Phone: _____

What is the best way to reach you? Email Work Phone Cell Phone Home Phone

DOB: _____ Sex: Male Female Can you speak Spanish either:
MM/DD/YYYY Fluently or Conversationally

In what position are you interested in volunteering? _____

Why would you like to volunteer with MERIT? _____

What are your skills and qualifications? _____

Time availability: Monday Tuesday Wednesday Thursday Friday
 Morning Afternoon Evening

How often are you able to volunteer?
 Once a month Once a week 2-3 times a month 2-3 times a week

I agree to the following requirements:

- To perform my volunteer duties to the best of my ability;
- To adhere to MERIT rules and procedures, including the confidentiality of agency and client information;
- To adhere to my volunteer commitments, or to provide adequate notice so that alternate arrangements can be made;
- To at all times conduct myself as a member of the team responsible for accomplishing MERIT's mission.

Any violation of the above requirements may be grounds for dismissal from volunteering with MERIT.

Signature Date

Please submit application to Kristen Mozian either by email kmozian@chemeketa.edu; fax 503-581-6017; or in person at 626 High St NE, Suite 210, Salem