



3000 Campus Hill Drive, Livermore CA 94551

Rural Community College Alliance
American Association of Community Colleges

To Whom It May Concern:

As president of Las Positas College, the purpose of this letter is to confirm that I support the application for the Agricultural Cooperative Initiative. This application provides details on how Las Positas College will work with the Livermore Valley Winegrowers Association to strengthen the college's Winegrowing Technology Program.

Sincerely,

Barry Russell

Barry A. Russell, Ph.D.
President

Application for Rural Community College Association Agricultural Cooperative Initiative November 2015

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Statement of Opportunity

Las Positas College (LPC) is located in the heart of the Livermore Valley wine country which has a vibrant agricultural economy based mainly on vineyards, olive trees, and a growing number of other crops. As the Livermore Valley diversifies its offerings and strengthens its economy, the Livermore Valley Winegrowers Association takes the lead in efforts of crop development, water conservation, and land conservancy efforts.

Las Positas College has had a vibrant viticulture, horticulture, and enology program for the last 10 years. Viticulture alone is California's second largest agricultural industry, generating in excess of 2.4 billion dollars each year to the grape growers. In this program, many of the local winegrowers and their staff have received training. LPC currently have one full-time faculty member focusing on the enology program and this year, will be adding another full-time faculty in its viticulture and horticulture program. These two faculty will provide the strength and direction needed to assess and rewrite curriculum with the help of the strong Livermore Valley Winegrowers Association.

The role of Las Positas College will be to bring together the various agriculturally based economies from the Livermore Valley and develop new programs that link courses at the college to the needs of the local economy. By providing new programs in vocational ESL, water conservation, and viticulture, LPC will be able to support the existing workers in the vineyards as well as bring new workers to the vineyards with skills that match the needs of the employers.

Statement of Capacity

The Livermore Valley has an east-west orientation, making it unique among northern California winegrowing regions. It is 15 miles long (east to west), 10 miles wide (north to south), and surrounded by coastal range mountains and foothills. The east-west orientation of the valley allows the coastal fog and marine breezes to come in from the Pacific Ocean and the San Francisco Bay and cool the valley's

warm air, resulting in warm days and cool nights ideal conditions for producing fully-ripened, balanced fruit. Primarily gravel with excellent drainage, a soil type that reduces the vines' vigor and increases flavor concentration in the grapes.

One of California's oldest wine regions, the Livermore Valley played a pivotal role in shaping California's wine industry. Spanish missionaries planted the first wine grapes in the Livermore Valley in the 1760s. In the 1840s, California pioneers looking for outstanding vineyard sites began planting grapes in the region. Robert Livermore planted the first commercial vines in the 1840s. Pioneer winemakers C. H. Wente, James Concannon, and Charles Wetmore recognized the area's winegrowing potential and founded their wineries in the early 1880s.

Livermore Valley captured America's first international gold medal for wine in 1889 at the Paris Exposition, putting California on the world wine map.

Livermore Valley wineries were the first to bottle varietal labeled Chardonnay, Sauvignon Blanc and Petite Sirah. Nearly 80% of California's Chardonnay vines trace their genetic roots to a Livermore Valley clone. Livermore Valley also boasted more than 50 wineries until Prohibition and contributed significantly to the state's enology and viticulture that lives on today.

Attracted to the rich winemaking tradition, climate, soil and geography, new winemakers and vineyardists are working alongside fifth generation winegrowers to create this Livermore Valley wine renaissance. The region now has over 40 wineries, with several more about to open, and more than 5,000 acres of vineyards. Wineries vary in size from limited release, 100-case labors of love to 400,000-case industry heavyweights, and grapes range from familiar Merlot and Chardonnay to Italian, Rhone and Spanish varieties. Welcoming tasting rooms showcase award-winning wines and offer year around activities. In addition to the myriad happenings at individual wineries, the Livermore Valley Winegrowers Association sponsors several consumer events each year, showcasing the talent, energy and fine wines of the region.

The Viticulture and Winery Technology (VWT) Program is designed to prepare students for careers in the wine industry. Courses will help individuals develop practical skills to enter a career in a variety of positions, or increase their career advancement opportunities. There are both Certificate and Associate in Science Degrees available to provide students with the knowledge and skills essential for success. Students are also able to pursue their studies in either of two tracks: Viticulture (grape growing) or Enology (wine making) by taking a series of production-oriented courses. Students may also elect to complete an Associate in Science degree in either Viticulture or Enology.

Key Staff

Leading this project will be the President of Las Positas College, **Dr. Barry Russell**. Dr. Russell has extensive experience at the local, state, and national level as an educational leader. His experience in working on economic development project goes back to his early career as a Tech Prep Coordinator in Central Texas. He is the most likely person to gain the trust of the employers in the region as well as to

convene the various meetings. All of Dr. Russell's time and travel will not be charged to the project and will be used as an in-kind donation.

Chris Chandler has been the Executive Director of the Livermore Valley Winegrowers Association for eight years. She has lead this agricultural cooperative to become one of the major economic development engines in California. For this project, Ms. Chandler will serve as the organizer of all the winemakers and wineries in the area, assisting them with information and helping to convene participants.

Serving as a consultant with this project will be **Dr. Rajnish Kahna**, entrepreneur and plant scientist at the Carnegie Institution for Science at Stanford University. He has also developed an application used on mobile devices that helps identify foods that are brought to the local market and used in local restaurants. His expertise as an entrepreneur and plant scientist will greatly impact the future development of the program.

Budget and Budget Narrative

The focus of the budget for this project will be on travel and time for members of Las Positas College and the Winegrowers Association to attend conferences to learn more about the economic development possibilities in rural America. This team will be lead by the President, Barry Russell. Dr. Russell's travel will not be charged to the project and will be treated as an in-kind commitment to the success of the project.

Attendance for three people at Workforce Development (WDI) on January 20-23, 2016 (3 people @ \$2,500 per person)	\$7,500
Attendance of two people at RCCA's annual conference on September 28-30, 2016 (2 people @ \$2,500 per person)	\$5,000
Meeting with RCCA in Oklahoma City for two people (2 people @ \$2,500 per person)	\$5,000
Consultant to guide economic development work for the project (40 hours @ \$150 per hour)	\$6,000
Release time for faculty to work on project (1 unit @ \$1,500)	\$1,500
TOTAL Budget	\$25,000