

American Rescue Plan Act-Coronavirus State & Federal Local Fiscal Recovery Funds

Request for Expenditure

Date of Request:	October 28, 2021
Contact person(s) for request (including contact information):	Kim Ewoldsen Sauk Valley Community College 173 IL Route 2 Dixon, IL 61021 815-600-6267 <u>Kim.s.ewoldsen@svcc.edu</u>
Department(s) for expenditure:	Ag Department
Timeline for project/expenditure:	Beginning Summer 2022 – Ending Spring 2024
ARPA Grant Category this expenditure falls under (reference Outline and/or IFR)	Section (4) Assistance to Unemployed Workers. Assistance, including job training, for individuals who want and are available for work, including those who have looked for work sometime in the past 12 months or who are employed part time but who want and are available for full-time work. Section (6) Small Business. Assistance to small businesses, including loans, grants, in-kind assistance, technical assistance or other services, that responds to the negative economic impacts of the COVID-19 public health emergency.

<p>Detailed cost of expenditure and timeline for project (Please include estimates and any other supporting documentation)</p>	<p>Please see attached document outlining our proposed scope of work and cost estimates.</p>
<p>Narrative regarding expenditure (how this expenditure fits into the funding, how this expenditure will benefit the department/county, details regarding project, etc.)</p>	<p>During the course of the pandemic, the College realized there were unmet needs for the agriculture industry. The college, as part of its mission, vision, goals and strategic plan found a community unmet need focusing on job training for those within the agriculture industry. Agriculture is the largest sector of our college district's economy and enhancing our existing agriculture classes will help provide additional job training for this sector.</p> <p>Precision and value-added agriculture are key components of the college's growth model for the agriculture program. Our ability to offer remote learning capabilities and advanced precision agriculture will allow us to provide job training to help unemployed and underemployed workers find employment in our area. Specifically, beyond our traditional for-credit courses, SVCC will intend to offer remote based customized precision agriculture instruction for farmers, companies, and other interested parties who may need more flexibility beyond a traditional sixteen week course.</p>

Providing funding for these training efforts will allow the College to realize its goal of retraining programs quicker which will increase the rate of hiring for our small, agribusinesses that have been impacted by the pandemic.

While we are in a labor shortage we are also in a skills shortage within the ag industry. This retraining and skills programs will allow us to serve our district by helping unemployed and underemployed find opportunities to offset the economic impact of the pandemic locally. Statistics show some people have only been able to obtain part-time work over the last eighteen months, by aiding in the additional offerings Sauk can provide, it will help those workers find full-time employment. A key part of making this work for everyone is also the addition of enhanced technical assistance that would be available through the remote capabilities of Sauk's ag program.

Funding through this program will enable us to meet the growing demand for retraining needs especially given our existing unemployment rate and labor shortage. The ag industry in Northwest Illinois is focused on retraining needs to help fill the labor shortage. The proposed use of funds will allow the college to meet the identified needs of our program and those of Lee County by increasing access to remote programing along with additional technology offerings to better prepare our graduates with the technology necessary to help our area small businesses in the ag sector to remain competitive in a global market.

As part of this proposal, SVCC also is looking to build a greenhouse/hoophouse on its property that will be fully automated and capable of being run remotely. This

	greenhouse will A. provide added instructor to our SVCC ag students interested in horticulture, B. provide shorter term flexible remote training for those interested in training that is not credit bearing and meets their needs in terms of a time frame. SVCC is working with other external community partners for funding who would take advantage of the greenhouse space for their specific needs (flower and tree propagation).
If this expense is ineligible under the grant funds and is a needed expense, which line item/account/fund do you anticipate using for expenditure?	
Signature/Date of person(s) submitting Request	
Expenditure: APPROVED DENIED Signature/Date of person(s) Approving/Denying Expenditure Request	

***Note this is a REQUEST for the expenditure to be reviewed and considered for payment with ARPA grant funds. Please await approval/denial prior to expending funds.**

1/5/22- Eligible Per Negative Economic Impacts - Assistance to Unemployed Workers of Job Training Assistance
Reporting Category 2.7

The Sauk Valley Community College ag program has spent a considerable amount of time creating programs which meet existing ag industry needs while providing skilled labor to area agribusinesses. As the program continues to grow, so do opportunities for enhancing programs and classes. Sauk ag professors, in conjunction with area industry leaders, have identified precision ag as an area for future growth. In addition, the college is again offering horticulture courses and expanding into sustainable alternative production systems. By including precision ag in the department, the program keeps pace with current industry practices and enables the adoption of emerging technologies throughout the college's district.

Our rural communities are still heavily reliant on agriculture and in Lee County in particular the ag sector comprises nearly 50% of the county's economy. Understanding the local economics of agriculture is key to the longevity of the program at the college. By adding precision agriculture and expanding into alternative cropping systems as seen through the district, the college will be able to enhance its remote learning toolkit through the deployment of technological assets for farmers and area agribusinesses to use. The addition of these materials would also enable the College to establish a true farm to table entrepreneurship for students and help meet the demand for food insecurity caused in part by the pandemic. Below is a small list of additional equipment needs and how they relate to both programming and class delivery. These needs enable learning in real time through remote capabilities as well as hybrids of remote, traditional in-person, and online course offerings. Should you have questions we would be happy to meet and discuss further.

Precision Agriculture (~\$100,000)

- GPS equipment - handheld, base station/RTK, and on-tractor units
- Precision planting and variable rate application equipment - SVCC planter and future spray unit
- Software to enable precision operations on tractor and in the office (to mesh with combine operations seasonally)
- Lab components to enable in-house testing of soil and water characteristics (enagages partnerships with SVCC science department)
- Integrated Pest Management UAS - expands current sUAS Part 107 operations into Part 137 (in partnership with private industry)

Horticulture and Organic/Alternative Production Systems (~\$150,000)

- Greenhouse/hoophouse setup including remote operation and monitoring equipment
- Nursery supplies for starts, vegetative propagation, transplant activities

Remote Educational Activities (~\$50,000)

- Cellular or better wireless broadband connectivity equipment for remote work (possibly a fixed wireless system)
- Hololens or other similar first-person POV instructional tech

Estimated Costs - \$300,000

A conservative estimate for purchase of all items in a premium format (some can be procured at reduced rates) would be: approximately \$300,000. The College is currently in discussions with Dixon to share

costs of a hoop house where a portion of the area would be used by the city to grow Petunias for their annual festival and street decor. In addition, the college anticipates the ag advisory committee would help identify other key funding sources including farm bureaus, industry partners and other ag-based associations.