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Organization:	Olive Hill Community Economic Development Corporation
Project Name:	Valdese Public Computer Center
Project Type:	Public Computer Center
State:	North Carolina
Federal Award:	\$448,742

ABOUT THE PROJECT

The Town of Valdese, along with much of the greater western region of North Carolina, has faced a challenging transition from a textile-based economy to the information economy. The **Olive Hill Community Economic Development Corporation** proposes to help address this challenge by establishing a public computer center in downtown Valdese, targeting assistance to disadvantaged local businesses, the unemployed, and individuals seeking higher education opportunities.

The Valdese Public Computer Center project plans to install 45 new broadband-enabled computer workstations to serve an estimated 150 users per week, a critical feature of the organization's comprehensive community improvement strategy that includes the renovation of a 70,000-square-foot facility within a former mill complex to house the public computer center.

The Valdese Public Computer Center also proposes to:

- Provide training to as many as 600 residents in a variety of economically beneficial disciplines such as worker retraining, business development, educational certifications, job seeking, and tax preparation via as many as 6,000 hours of teacher-led training.
- Partner with Western Piedmont Community College (WPCC) to provide ongoing educational curricula and guidance on technology for the center, as well as training to center staff. WPCC's Small Business Center will also provide regular seminars at the center focusing on small business development.

ORGANIZATION'S HISTORY

The Olive Hill Community Economic Development Corporation has served Burke County, North Carolina, and surrounding areas since 1999. Its mission is to impact the social, physical, educational, and economic environment of the region with efforts centered on fostering entrepreneurship and offering low- to moderate-income communities and traditionally underserved individuals opportunities to become managers and owners of small businesses.

PROJECT PARTNERS

- Town of Valdese
- Western Piedmont Community College
- Burke County Employment Security Commission
- Airlie, LLC
- North Carolina Rural Economic Development Center

Data provided in the project description is based on information supplied by the applicant. An executive summary of this application can be found on www.ntia.doc.gov/broadbandusa.

For press-related inquiries, contact 202-482-7002 or press@ntia.doc.gov. For the general public, contact BTOP@ntia.doc.gov.

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