



## Capacity Building Partners - Case Study

### Technology Management for The James Irvine Foundation

#### *Quality*

The James Irvine Foundation is a large organization that is providing funding for numerous community based organizations and small non-profit organizations. The Foundation has launched the CORAL initiative (Communities Organizing Resources to Advance Learning) in 1999. This initiative is aimed at bringing technology based learning and capacity building, supporting community based organization in low income areas. This ambitious initiative requires the collaboration of various consultants, Community leaders, parents and volunteers.

#### *Service*

#### *Dedication*

#### *Integrity*

#### *Value*

Strategic Business Resources, Inc. (SBR) has been working with the Foundation and community leaders in five California cities to provide technology consulting and technical support services. The Foundation retained SBR to provide statewide technology planning, technology management and support the initiative. SBR's scope includes the CORAL online community maintenance and support, database administration for the statewide database and evaluation system, onsite network support, centralized purchasing and technical training.

SBR designed and managed the implementation of all CORAL site networks. This implementation required negotiations with many vendors such as telecommunication services, hardware and software vendors. The result was saving of over 15% compared to retail pricing based on volume purchasing.

SBR worked with the community based organizations to install and configure all networks. A unique capacity building approach was used to keep costs low while making the community based organization more self sufficient. On many implementations, SBR provided engineers that would train site staff and teens that are being served by the organization to deploy the network. A training session would be held every morning for 1-2 hours. During the training the teens are exposed to the theories and practices of network engineering. The engineers would then move on to the day's tasks and action items. The teens are then allowed to cable, setup computers and printers throughout their network. While the teens setup the systems, the engineer would ensure that all work is done to the highest quality possible. This approach provides the teens with advanced network support skills as well as obtaining a sense of ownership of the systems in their community based organizations.

Once the deployment is completed, the teens are taught the basics of troubleshooting and maintaining their systems. Many of the teens that were involved in these implementations continue to support the networks that they originally installed.

There are many positive outcomes realized due to SBR's approach. First, the cost of deploying networks is drastically reduced. The teens volunteer to setup the network as part of their project based learning. Second, the teens get a sense of ownership of the systems that they have installed, thereby taking extra care of all systems. Third, the ongoing maintenance and support cost are drastically reduced since the teens involved in the programs are maintaining the systems themselves (with the exception of the server). Fourth, this approach builds capacity in the community and in the organizations that participate in these programs, by making them less dependant and more self sufficient.

SBR's partnership with community based organizations has yielded many mutual benefits, and has established close relationships and partnerships with the community, teens and parents.

### **Strategic Business Resources, Inc.**

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