

TRIUMPH GULF COAST, INC. PRE-APPLICATION FORM

Triumph Gulf Coast, Inc. (“Triumph Gulf Coast”) has created a pre-application process to provide initial consideration of potential ideas for projects or programs that may seek an award of funding. Applicants are required to participate in the pre-application process. Notwithstanding the response from Triumph Gulf Coast on the pre-application form, an Applicant may still elect to submit an Application.

Brief Description of Background of Individual/Entity/Organization: Westonwood Ranch is a non-profit development established in February 2017 and is awaiting 501c(3) status. Emerald Coast Autism Center (ECAC) is a 501c(3) therapy-based school for children with autism located on the college campus of Northwest Florida State College in Niceville, FL. For the past year, ECAC has been serving as the fiscal sponsor of Westonwood Ranch and will continue to collaborate in its operations.

Contact Information:

Primary Contact Information: Westonwood Ranch, Inc.
Title: Lindy Wood, President
Mailing Address: 4390 Highway 20 West, Freeport FL, 32439
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Website: www.westonwood.org

Names of co-applicants, partners or other entities, organizations that will have a role in the proposed project or program:

Emerald Coast Autism Center, Okaloosa County (www.ecautismcenter.org) – co-applicant. Our community partners are Special Olympics of Walton County, Alaqua Animal Refuge of Walton County, Biophilia Center of Walton County, Coastal Blue Hydroponic Farms of Walton County *WALTON COUNTY BOARD OF COMMISSION ENDORSED THIS PROJECT at their Nov 7th BOCC Meeting.

REQUIRED EXECUTIVE SUMMARY:

In a maximum of three (3) pages, please describe the proposed project or program, including (i) the amount of funds being sought from Triumph Gulf Coast; (ii) the amount and identity of other sources of funds for the proposed project or program; (iii) the location of the project or program; (iv) summary description of the proposed program, including how the program will be transformational and promote economic recovery, diversification, and enhancement of the disproportionately affected counties, and (v) a summary timeline for the proposed project or program.

IMPORTANT NOTICE

This pre-application process will **not** result in an award of funding by Triumph Gulf Coast. Rather, this process is designed to facilitate submission of ideas for potential projects or programs before the Applicant expends time and/or resources to complete a full Application. All Applicants for funding are required to complete an Application, which will be scored, and then considered for award in the discretion of Triumph Gulf Coast Board.

WESTONWOOD RANCH, WALTON CO. FL

PROJECT LOCATION:

4390 Highway 20 West in the Freeport Municipality of Walton County, FL 32439.
Centrally located in Walton County.

TRIUMPH FUNDING REQUEST: 1,078,230

MATCH FUNDING: 367,000

Total Cash: 1,445,230

ELIGIBILITY

- ✓ Grants to support programs that prepare students for future occupations and careers at K-20 institutions that have campuses in the disproportionately affected counties. Grants to support programs that provide participants in the disproportionately affected counties with transferable, sustainable workforce skills that are not confined to a single employer; and
- ✓ Grants to the tourism entity created under s. 288.1226 for the purpose of advertising and promoting tourism and Fresh from Florida, and grants to promote workforce and infrastructure, on behalf of all of the disproportionately affected

SUMMARY: Autism affects 1 in 68 children in the US (CDC), many of whom will need to follow a vocational track once they age out of the educational system. There is a significant need in Walton County for transition-to-work programs that target young adults on the autism spectrum, especially those on the mid- to lower-functioning end in addition to other related developmental disabilities.

Westonwood Ranch (WWR) is the transformational, non-profit, farm based, therapeutic program to address life skill deficits and job training needs of individuals with Autism and related Developmental Disabilities in Okaloosa and Walton County. This unique program, structure and highly skilled staffing is like no other program available in the Panhandle. The end result of this program is gainful employment in local business entities or permanent employment on the ranch.

The project development site is located on 10 acres on a 40-acre ranch in Freeport, FL. Project design includes a 12,000 sf vocational training center (4,580sf of heated and cooled space) which includes a covered equine arena with stables. A commercial scale 120'x 32' aquaponic greenhouse will serve as a self-sustaining enterprise for participants. Our program will establish and foster working relationships with local businesses to serve as internship sites for permanent employment opportunities (current sites include Alaqua, Biophilia Center and Coastal Blue Farms) . We also plan to implement various outreach/educational programs addressing autism inclusion in the community. Our focus is to teach FUNCTIONAL life skills that will translate into the community and to place participants in jobs throughout Walton and Okaloosa.



The Westonwood Ranch (WWR) will begin operations with 24 paid full time staff. Our program will have the capacity to serve approximately 140 students in our program, with the ultimate goal of community employment. WWR fundamentally changes the landscape for young adults with autism in our community by providing ongoing vocational training and supports once students age out of the educational system. This includes Emerald Coast Autism Center existing stakeholders, in addition to individuals currently enrolled in Okaloosa and Walton County School District. This provides a natural, and desperately needed, extension of their mission. These families are looking ahead and trying to prepare for adulthood for their children with few, if any, opportunities available. In many cases we see parents quitting their jobs and staying home with these young adults once they age out. This is not sustainable, nor is it in the best interest of the individuals with autism, their families, or the community as a whole. Additionally, WWR vastly expands the amount and types of stakeholders that ECAC can serve. We are not limited to existing ECAC students, we can serve individuals with autism throughout Okaloosa and Walton counties, on both ends of the autism spectrum, develop productive futures.

With the looming crisis of individuals with Autism reaching adulthood, many families are searching for permanent residences/relocating to specialized services for their family member affected by autism so that their futures will be enhanced and supported. This program has the ability to draw other families from out of state to relocate to Okaloosa and Walton Counties in order to obtain these innovative services to their special needs family member.



Impacting Lives and the Larger Community

- ❖ Job training and life skills services are designed to help participants succeed in jobs that enable them to live as independently as possible, reduce or eliminate their need for publicly funded benefits, and be fully contributing members of their local communities.
- ❖ Promotion of Fresh from Florida campaign through our produce grown directly in our commercial aquaponic facility and our focus on sustainable agriculture.
- ❖ CDC reports the incident rate of autism to be 1:68. Combining that with US Census Bureau data, we estimate the number of individuals affected by autism in Walton County alone to be 968.
- ❖ The positive impact is also felt by the FAMILY supporting the participant. Parents should not be forced to abandon their own careers to be primary caregivers.
- ❖ The creation of a **diverse** workforce and **inclusive** culture will not happen on its own. We will step in and foster working relationships with individual businesses providing support and education regarding employment of individuals with special abilities.



BUDGET

Expenses

Construction Costs	903,000
Commercial Aquaponics greenhouse	84,000
Furniture and Equipment	45,000
Farm Equipment	12,300
Pre-Owned Passenger Van	26,430
website	7,500

Sources of Funds

development site	150,000 (in kind)
Salary (development phase)	65,000 (in kind)
Legal Fees	2,000 (in kind)
Therapy Horses/Horse Tack	13,000 (in Kind)
Private Donor CASH MATCH	50,000
Third Party Charitable Pledges	25,000
La Lumiere Foundation Grant	50,000
Naming Campaign Fundraising	12,000

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FUNDING: WWR is designed to have each of the divisions contribute financially back to the overall expenses of the program. The aquaponics greenhouse design lends itself to be self-sustainable. The organic greens and catfish produced will be sold within the community and the revenue will go back into WWR. Likewise, the Animal Husbandry and Landscape Maintenance divisions will produce revenue-generating services and reduce overall maintenance expenses. The overall program at WWR will be tuition-based (will be a McKay and Gardiner Scholarship Provider) but will also rely on donations and other grants. We also expect to levy support in the form of various community fundraising events at the farm ranging from professional rodeos, fall festivals....

SUMMARY TIMELINE: Westonwood Ranch Project has obtained necessary Development Order from Walton County. Architectural design is complete. Currently seeking building permitting. This project is shovel ready. Construction phase slated to begin Jan 15th, 2018 with project completion December 2018

THANK YOU FOR YOUR CONSIDERATION.



WESTONWOOD
RANCH