

TRIUMPH GULF COAST, INC. PRE-APPLICATION FORM

APPLICANT INFORMATION

Name of Individual/Entity/Organization: Pensacola State College

Proposal Title: Connect NW Florida

Amount of Triumph Funds Requested: \$3.5 million

Total Estimated Project Cost: \$8.3 million

Brief Description of Individual/Entity/Organization:

Pensacola State College, under the governance of a local Board of Trustees, annually serves more than 25,000 students in its two-county service area – Escambia and Santa Rosa counties in the Northwest Florida Panhandle. The College, a member of the Florida College System, offers baccalaureate and associate degrees, workforce certificates, adult education leading to a high school diploma or GED, business and industry training, non-credit continuing education, community outreach, and cultural enrichment opportunities for students and the community. The College is committed to providing quality, affordable, and accessible educational opportunities through a variety of delivery methods.

Contact Information:

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

Santa Rosa County Development Office

CareerSource Escarosa

FloridaWest Economic Development Alliance, Inc.

Santa Rosa County Development Office

Pensacola State College Pre-Application to TRIUMPH

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

- (i) **Amount of funds being sought from Triumph Gulf Coast:** \$3.5 million
- (ii) **Amount and identity of other sources of funds for the proposed project or program:**
- PSC College Funding: \$2.9 million (cash)
 - U.S. Department of Commerce Economic Development Administration (EDA) Funding: \$1.6 million (training facility)
 - Santa Rosa County Economic Development: \$49,500 (land clearing)
 - FLDOE GEERS Rapid Credentialing Grant: \$250,000 (2 simulators)
- (iii) **The location of the project or program:**

The proposed project will be in Santa Rosa County at the Santa Rosa Industrial Park East, located in Section 28, Township 2 North, Range 27 West on Jeff Ates Road. The location is two miles from U.S. Interstate 10 and 1 mile from Hwy. 87.

(iv) **Summary description of the proposed program:**

This project was created in response to identified deficiencies in Workforce Board Region 1 (Escambia and Santa Rosa counties) caused by events such as Hurricanes Ivan, Dennis, and Sally, the economic recession, the Deepwater Horizon Oil Spill, and the COVID-19 pandemic. Primarily, there is the need to diversify our economy, historically heavily reliant on the tourism industry, so that we're poised to withstand future natural and man-made disasters. Therefore, this project addresses the needs of employers from several occupations within the Logistics & Distribution and industry sectors as identified by CareerSource Escarosa (Region 1 Workforce Board), Enterprise Florida and the Florida Department of Economic Opportunity (DEO). The programs included in this project – commercial vehicle driving – will enhance efforts to move under- and unemployed individuals into high-wage jobs and support multiple employers from several industry sectors.

According to Enterprise Florida, Logistics & Distribution is “big business” in Florida and the broader wholesale trade, transportation and logistics industry employs more than half a million individuals.

In March 2017, the American Trucking Association cited approximately 48,000 unfilled trucker positions nationwide, and predicts that the freight driver shortage could grow to more than 170,000 vacancies by 2025.¹ In Florida alone, about 70% of all freight and/or commerce is transported via trucks.² The Class A Commercial Driver's License earned by individuals enrolled in the project's transportation program will qualify them to drive interstate tractor-trailers utilized by a variety of industries nationwide. According to the Florida Economic Opportunity, Bureau of Labor Market Statistics (2019-2027 projections), the need for Heavy and Tractor-Trailer Truck Drivers in Escambia and Santa Rosa counties will grow by 1.1% resulting in 1,741 total job openings. The 2018 median hourly wage for these commercial truck drivers is

¹ <http://cerasis.com/2017/03/17/freight-driver-shortage/>

² <http://www.drivearmellini.com/Truck-driver-shortage-throughout-Florida.asp>

\$16.92/hour. In addition, the demand for other driving occupations requiring a Commercial Driver’s License (CDL), such as School or Special Client bus drivers, will increase 3.8% resulting in 665 openings in Escambia and Santa Rosa counties. CareerSource Escarosa, the regional workforce board, reports that they are receiving continuous requests from employers seeking CDL Licensed drivers, and these job orders are going unfilled due to a lack of qualified candidates.

Truck driving training is temporarily taking place in a classroom on the PSC Warrington Campus and a field owned by the U.S. Navy. Santa Rosa County has leased property located at the Santa Rosa Industrial Park East to Pensacola State College for a term of forty (40) years, beginning in August 2019, for the sum of One Dollar (\$1.00) per year as the location for an educational facility to provide technical education programs such as commercial truck drive3r training, lineman training, diesel mechanic training, and other additional education programs to be implemented in the future.

On September 18, 2020, PSC received a \$1.6 million grant from the U.S. Department of Commerce Economic Development Administration (EDA) to support the construction of the new training facility, which is supported with \$2.9 million in College funding.

The new training facility will consist of a 13,000 square foot truck driving training building. There will be a 10-1’-4” x 125’-0” pre-engineered metal building teaching facility with new water and electric utilities and a 400’-0” x 400’-0” concrete pad for truck driving instruction. This facility lends itself to future use for additional workforce programs such as training diesel mechanics. Triumph funds will be used for program expansion, including for trucks, truck driving simulators, training facility furniture, faculty, professional development for faculty, student scholarships, industry certification reimbursements, and marketing/promotion. This proposed TRIUMPH project would also provide funding to expand the driving range/pad to include a separate area as required to become an official testing site, making this the only testing site currently available in the two-county region.

(v) Summary timeline for the proposed project:

Activity	Month(s)
Final TRIUMPH term negotiations, project activities begin	1
Project design work for training facility/driving pad	1-6
Additional truck driving faculty hired	1-2
Purchasing processes for truck driving equipment	1-3
Truck driving program marketing begins	3
Additional truck driving program sections begin with students	4
Permitting for construction of facility	3-6
Construction of facility	3-12
Permitting for testing facility/driving pads	6-7
Construction of testing facility/driving pads	6-12