Cooperative Extension Venture Capital Fund Proposal Form

Title of Proposed Project
Colorado Family Development and Credentialing Program (CO FDC)

I. PI Name(s) and Contact Information (PI, or at least one Co-PI, must be an Extension employee)
Christine Cerbana (PI), Janet Benavente (Co-PI), Ann Bruce (Co-PI), and Bridget Ohl (CO-PI)
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II. Will this be a state-wide project, or have multi-county emphasis? If multi-county, list all counties that will be participants.
This will be a state-wide project. The presence of master’s-level CSUCE educators in 59 of the 64 counties in Colorado will allow for wide-spread participation throughout the state.

III. Indicate which Core Competency Area(s) this work falls under, or if it addresses the Front Door mission of the University.

- Strong Families, Healthy Homes
- Natural Resources and the Environment
- Nutrition, Health and Food Safety
- Competitive & Sustainable Agricultural Systems
- 4-H and Youth Development
- Community Resource Development
- Front Door Mission

V. Cooperative Extension Work Team Affiliation
Strengthening Youth through Families (SYTF); Early Childhood & Out-of-School Age Care (ECOSAC)

VI. Situation Statement
The importance of professional development for the workforce receives greater recognition now than ever before. In education reform, professional development is viewed as the primary vehicle of change needed to transform schools (Guskey, 1994). Professional development is a high priority for policy makers because research indicates linkages between training, worker performance, service/program quality, child and youth outcomes. Experts in early childhood education agree that staff quality is critical to positive experiences for children and youth.

The nation is also experiencing environmental shifts in the lab or markets. Faced with training budget reductions and accountability, states and professionals across sectors are searching for learning experiences that are time and cost efficient but also engaging and meaningful. The more common “one shot” workshop model faces criticism because it fails to deliver depth and application of learning.

The demand for highly skilled workers is on the rise. Today, more than ever, a range of competencies in several professional fields (early childhood, prevention) is required for the individuals in the workforce. For many occupations there is a provision for accreditation or credentialing to “continuing professional education” and proving competence. The Head Start Bureau, for example, issued the Information Memorandum of 2001 that describes the Head Start Family Worker Training and Credentialing Initiative and further defines the competency goals and indicators to improve the preparation and ongoing professional development of Family Workers.

In response to these concerns, a cademic extension programs at universities must provide convenient, quality and affordable services and instruction through a variety of course and delivery formats. Staffing shortage in the child welfare sector, for example, has spurred public agency-university partnerships to educate and increase workforce retention. The Strengthening Youth Through Families Work Team recognizes Cooperative Extension as an appropriate vehicle for both academic credit or non-credit courses/programs delivered through distance education or via off-campus, face to face instruction.

The Family Development Credential Program is an example of the effort to increase opportunities to reach established as well as underserved constituencies. The FDC curriculum supports and augments the professional skills of family visitors from family programs such as Head Start as well as professionals from a wide range of government, private and non-profits agencies, business and large corporations. Currently, there are no other professional development and/or credentialing programs in Colorado that address this paradigm shift, that is, a movement toward a “shared power” rather than a “power over” approach in human services.

Further, there is a growing population of families statewide who are at-risk for economic and social implications of poverty. The FDC program is an approach in go-al-setting and support, leading to empowered and self-reliant families. As it is the purpose of CE and this land-grant university to serve the expressed needs of the people of Colorado, we can only point to the positive outcomes of those populations receiving the benefits of the FDC approach of empowerment: the families and the children of CO.
VII. Project Description

The Family Development Credentialing Program (hereby referred to as FDC) is a 90 hours, highly interactive course with required portfolio and exam designed to provide frontline family workers with skills that support family development principles of self-reliance and empowerment. Core principles include self-reliance, communication, diversity, goal setting, facilitation skills, and collaboration. Developed at Cornell University, the Empowering Families Project allowed us to “import” the FDC program, thereby adding Colorado to the list of 14 other states currently implementing the curriculum. In New York State alone, the Family Development Movement has credentialled over 4000 individuals since its inception in 1994.

With the recognition that academic extension programs are an integral part of higher education, the vision is to initially offer this specialty program off-campus, with face-to-face delivery by trained Family & Consumer Science (FCS) field faculty. As of June 2006, nine (9) FCS agents are trained in the FDC program and will serve 23 counties in Colorado in partnership with local agencies. Colorado State University Cooperative Extension is able to fulfill its commitment of providing a much needed educational opportunity to citizens of the state. The FDC Program at Colorado State University will provide all state and local agencies with accessible, high quality training resources.

The Strengthening Youth Through Families (hereby referred to as SYTF) work team introduced the FDC program to Human Development and Family Studies (HDFS) faculty members and the curriculum was recently approved by CAHS Curriculum Committee and is currently being processed through the University Curriculum Committee. The FDC program will be offered for continuing education, undergraduate and graduate credit, through the Division of Continuing Education. An agreement was signed with the Empowering Families Project at Cornell University and the “license fee” paid. Funds for the fee were generated through SYTF, Colorado Family Education, Resources and Training (CFERT), 4-H Competency Core Area and CE administration monies. A steering committee comprised of faculty, extension specialists, extension agents, CE and DCE administrators, educators, frontline workers, and students guides the process of instituting the program in Colorado. The vision for the FDC involves a high degree of campus and field collaboration. The success of the FDC is dependent on the partnerships created – campus faculty and specialists supporting the work by the FCS agents, and FCS agents as part of the “front door” mission of the university.

The initial organization and coordination of the FDC program was accomplished by a coordinator supported by C& cooperative Extension (CE) administration through a loan. The FDC coordinator established the first training of Family and Consumer Sciences agents June 27-30, 2006. Nine FCS agents, one community partner and one extension specialist completed the training. In order to continue the process of establishing the FDC as a certificated program at CSU, this application proposes to utilize the capital funds as “start-up” to support the FDC coordinator. A coordinator is an essential position needed for the organization, planning, technical assistance, and support to implement the program. In addition, the state coordinator administers the exam and verifies authenticity of the workers’ portfolios, as well as oversees the process of issuing the credential. FDC Instructor training will be offered bi-annually to train FCS agents and professional’s from human service agencies. These and other duties must be performed for the certificated program to be successful. Capital funds will be allocated for the purchase of curriculum, supplies and marketing. In addition, the FDC is captured within the CFERT scope of work and is partially supported through its grant and funding sources.

Three of the co-principals were trained by Cornell, and may serve as facilitators of the FDC course, as well as trainers of facilitators (e.g. CE personnel and other professionals) in the state of Colorado. This proposal involves county and campus Cooperative Extension employees as the co-principal investigators, demonstrates multi-county/campus and interdepartmental collaboration, and may potentially change the way we work with families throughout the state. The initial thrust for facilitators will tap into the FCS agent pool, however all interested CE personnel will have the opportunity to be trained as facilitators.

Maxwell, Field and Clifford (Defining and measuring professional development in early childhood research, Zaslow & Martinez-Beck, Critical Issues in early childhood professional development, 2005) identified three components of professional development: Education, training and credential. Education encompasses professional development activities that occur within the formal education system and includes both general and content specific education. Training is defined as professional development activities that occur outside the formal education system. Credential refers to certification of individuals that conveys both status to the holders and provides assurance to consumers. The FDC, as it will be delivered through a collaboration of Colorado State University Cooperative Extension, the Department of Human Development and Family Studies and the Division of Continuing Education, has aspects of all components.

VIII. Anticipated Impacts/Outcomes of this Work

A study conducted in New York State found these results:
- families recognized their strengths, set their own goals, and developed plans to reach healthy self-reliance
- families increased their involvement in agencies, school, community organizations that reflected self-empowerment
- workers increased self-esteem, confidence & assertiveness when helping families, setting career goals, and pursuing higher education
- workers improved communication and relationship skills in personal and professional ways
- workers increased knowledge and use of empowerment-based family support skills
- supervisors reported higher staff morale and lower turnover
- agencies incorporated use of FDC assessment tools
- commitment by administrators to implement empowerment-based family support practices across programs

It is anticipated that we would have similar outcomes for this program in addition to these:
A. Short-term learning: Provide frontline family workers with the knowledge, skills and competencies needed to empower families to attain a healthy self-reliance and interdependence with their communities.

B. Mid-term: The FDC program is taught throughout Colorado, initially using partnerships with FCS field agents and community agency facilitators, from all public, private and non-profit service systems (e.g. home visitors, case managers, family resource center workers, community health workers and school workers); the FDC will provide a career pathway into college for workers with little or no formal training or higher education; families set goals and developed plans

C. Long-term: Families, service providers and policy makers will reorient the way services are delivered toward a more family-focused and strengths-based approach, thereby shifting the paradigm away from “power over” to a “shared power” approach to helping families achieve long-lasting changes in their lives and achieve self-reliance.

IX. Partnerships
A number of partnerships are forming both locally, and in time, across the state. Initially a partnership exists with the College of Applied Human Sciences and in particular, the Department of Human Development and Family Studies. Dr. David MacPhee and Dr. Karen Barrett (faculty from HDFS) serve on the CO FDC Steering Committee, providing assistance with curriculum development and the establishment of HD 475: Family Development Services I, a four-credit course. The College of Applied Human Sciences Curriculum Committee recently approved HD475. The Division of Continuing Education at CSU is offering support and assistance with the FDC credential in Colorado. Both Thompson and Poudre School District’s Head Start and Early Childhood Programs are actively working in collaboration with CFERT in the development of the FDC program for school personnel.

Other programs state-wide include Colorado Head Start, whose primary interest in the FDC is to train Head Start family workers in this effective strengths-based approach. The Colorado Head Start Collaboration Project Director invited members of SYTF and CFERT to present at the Region VIII Head Start Conference in October. Two workshop sessions on the FDC were conducted. The Region VIII Head Start Administrator is apprised and supportive of the FDC program. Head Start is requiring professional development and advanced education/degrees of Head Start personnel. The Office of Professional Development at the Community College of Denver, where a credential program for early childhood resides, is helping establish the FDC as a credential program in Colorado. Partnerships with state agencies are being pursued through the auspices of the state Prevention Leadership Council, whose membership include administrators from various state agencies, including Colorado Department of Public Health; Education; Justice and more. These partnerships will increase awareness and access to FDC training.

X. Action Plan, including a Time Line for the Project
Timeline for Project:
2. Trained 9 FCS agents, one community partner and 1 extension specialist in the facilitation of the FDC Empowerment Skills for Family Workers curriculum: June 27-30, 2006.
3. CO FDC Empowerment Skills curriculum is offered in counties, and locally, by trained instructors beginning Fall’07.
5. HD 475 is offered as a Human Development & Family Studies elective Fall Semester 2007.
### Logic Model

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<tr>
<th>Inputs</th>
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<th>Outcomes-Impact</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>What do we need to achieve our goals?</td>
<td>Activities</td>
<td>Participation</td>
<td>Immediate</td>
<td>Short Term</td>
<td>What ultimate impact is hoped for?</td>
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<td>SYTF Work Team; CFERT; FDC Steering Committee; HDFS; DCE; FDC Coordinator; CSUCE; Time Money Materials Equipment Technology; Partners</td>
<td>FDC Institute Trainings; Steering committee Meetings; Curriculum Development; Presentations; Publications; Media, Publicity, Marketing; Web Site</td>
<td>FDC Institute Trainings; Campus Specialists; HDFS; DCE; County FCS agents &amp; other CE personnel</td>
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### Evaluation Plan to Document Outcomes/Impacts
The evaluation of the FDC Program was deemed to be a critical part of the program by the Steering Committee. Faculty from HDFS will be instrumental in the development and implementation of the evaluation plan. A modified version of *Five Levels of Professional Development Evaluation Model* proposed by Thomas Guskey (*Evaluating Professional Development*, Corwin, 2000) will be used: Level 1 – Participants’ Reactions; Level 2 – Participants’ Learning; Level 3 - Organization Support & Change; Level 4 - Participants’ Use of New Knowledge and Skills; and Level 5 – Family Outcomes.

We hope that the FDC will achieve:

a. for families - families focus on their strengths, access services effectively, set goals and achieve healthy self-reliance
b. for frontline workers - the FDC offers quality training that will enable workers to acquire knowledge, skills and competencies to work effectively with families; determine if the FDC is an entry into higher education
c. for the state of Colorado – the FDC transforms the way agencies work with families, fosters collaboration, reduce duplication and streamlines training for frontline workers.

**XII. Sustainability Statement**

Once the FCS agents are trained as FDC instructors and begin teaching the course, the potential to generate revenue for Colorado State University and Cooperative Extension will be substantial. This will generate funds for the county, the work team, Cooperative Extension, Human Development and Family Studies, DCE and the University. DCE generated a spreadsheet with a scenario for the fall 2006-spring 2007, with 10 instructors delivering the course to 20 participants/class. If the tuition for the course is $850/participant, then the total revenue for that period is $170,000.

The other source of revenue for the program will come from the FDC Institute. Two sets of training per year will be conducted at a cost of $500/ participant. If 10 participants attend the training/set, then the revenue from this source will be $5000 or $10,000 per year.

The revenue will support the continued operation of the of the FDC program once the revenue is collected. The revenue generated will be distributed to the various entities:

d. to the county for user fees and to support continued programming,
e. to the SYTF work to support their plan of work, evaluation and the FDC Coordinator
f. to CFERT to support the development of other credential programs, professional development of CFERT staff and FCS agents, and support for the FDC coordinator
g. to HDFS as the departmental home of FDC; support the evaluator of the FDC Program
h. to CSUCE to support programming
i. to DCE and CSU

**XIII. Funding Request and Budget Narrative**

*Total request (limit of two years) not to exceed $15,000; expenditures not to exceed $7500/year. List time and effort for any salary dollars; briefly explain how and when dollars for travel, supplies, and equipment will be expended.*

Total request is for $15,000 @ $7500/year NOTE: a portion of the initial cost is assumed by CFERT budgeting/funding.

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<tr>
<th>Category</th>
<th>Details</th>
<th>Program Cost</th>
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<tr>
<td>A. Personnel</td>
<td>FDC State Coordinator; Currently 45 % FTE; will increase 25 % to a total of 70 % FTE</td>
<td>$7,000</td>
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<td>Fringe</td>
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<td></td>
<td>Total Personnel Cost</td>
<td>$7,000</td>
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<tr>
<td>B. Operating Expense</td>
<td>Easel paper, markers, supplies for training boxes, candy, etc.</td>
<td>$100</td>
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<td>Curriculum:</td>
<td>Facilitator’s manual, Family Worker’s Manual &amp; Portfolio Advisor’s Manual @ $150/set x 2 sets</td>
<td>$300</td>
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<td>Printing of</td>
<td>2000 copies @ $0.05/copy</td>
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<td>marketing flyers</td>
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<td>and brochures</td>
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<td>Total Operating Expense</td>
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<td>Total Program Cost</td>
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