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Promotional Copy

#4162 – Community Squash Club Business Planning

Organization Information

The Highlands Squash Club has two squash courts and provides squash facilities to the Haliburton County residents. There is a board of directors of 7 members who managed the operation of the club. We are an incorporated organization and were established in 1980.

Project Information

The membership in the squash club has fallen to a critical level and the club is having difficulty covering the costs of the facility in which the courts exist. The club needs assistance to develop a Business Plan for the club. It is envisioned that such a plan will include a membership marketing plan as well as suggestions of the viability of other strategies that might promote sustainability by offsetting cost (ie – attracting partners who may pay a fee for use of facility such as aerobics classes).

The students will be developing a plan for the sustainability of the Highlands Squash Club. Steps in the development of the plan could include:

- A literature review to identify the essential elements in a business plan for a small organization that needs to become sustainable.
- Identification of specific organizations and the development of case studies to better understand their operations (2-3 case studies)
- Conducting interviews with key informants in the Haliburton community to gather their input into the Business Plan. Key informants may include: municipal staff, squash club board members and users, potential partners in the community.

The information should result in a final report including recommendations for future action and possibly future research. Student may have the opportunity to give a presentation to the Board of the Squash Club at the end of the project.

Benefit to the Community

Without a viable Business Plan, that is easy to implement by a small group of volunteers, the club will not be viable and the club will be forced to suspend operations. This will result in a loss of an important facility for the community. The County has so few options for recreational activities that it would be a shame to lose one of those options. With a small contingent of volunteers the club does not have the resources to define such a plan themselves and would benefit greatly from the expertise of a university supervised research project to determine a plan to sustain the club.

Potential Learning for the Student

Students would develop skills in organizational management through the development of a business plan. Development of a business plan is a skill that is transferable to other business opportunities that the student may encounter in the future. They would also learn to apply their creative instincts to the development of a plan that will lead to the sustainability of this small but, important organization. The process will include interview of key informants, thereby developing interview skills.

Resources Required for Project Provided by Host

Host: Photocopying, office supplies, long distance phone calls.

U-Links: The cost of a rental vehicle **OR** reimbursement for fuel (student owned vehicle) to travel to and from Haliburton County for up to **four (4)** visits.

All costs for transportation beyond the four visits, including rental and fuel costs, as well as fuel costs for project related travel within the county are the responsibility of the host organization.

Screening or Training Requirements

Business background with an understanding of marketing.

Skills that Would Be an Asset to the Student(s)

People with an interest in recreation (specifically squash but, not necessarily)

Interview skills

Writing skills (documentation of the plan)