1. Program Or Project Name:

*English as a Second Language Employment Program (ESLEP)*

2. Contact Name:

*I. M. Heretohelp*

3. May we contact you with follow-up questions or for clarification?

*Yes*

4. Contact Address & Phone Number:

*1776 Employment Ave.*
*Union City, IL 69815*
 *(263)456-7890*

5. Email Address:

*imheretohelp@employment.org*

6. Website Address:

*http://www.employment.org/*

7. Name Or Title Of Promising Practice:

*English as a Second Language Employment Program (ESLEP)*

8. Mission/Goals Of The Project:

*To provide a safe, supportive environment for Samoans with disabilities who speak a language other than English as their primary language. To provide intensive English training; job training, job seeking, and job retention support groups. To match client skills with jobs they desire.*

9. General Information About Community Served (For Example, Rural, Urban?)

*(Sample responses in italics)*

**PROMISING EMPLOYMENT PRACTICES FOR ASIAN AMERICANS AND PACIFIC ISLANDERS WITH DISABILITIES SURVEY**
Union City is a Chicago bedroom community of about 50,000 people. Many commute to jobs in Chicago.

10. General Information About Population Served (For Example, 1st Generation Vietnamese?)

Until about ten years ago, Union City was largely African-American. During the past decade, Samoans have emigrated here and compose about 25% of the current population. Of that number, it’s estimated that 10% have disabilities.

11. Program Or Project Start Date:

July 4, 2001

12. Approximate Cost/Budget

$500,000

13. Funding Sources:

Illinois Division of Vocational Rehabilitation; U.S. Department of Education Rehabilitation Services Administration; Union City taxes.

14. Does Your Project Partner With Any Other Groups And/Or Organizations, Government Agencies? If So, Who Are These Partners?

All organizations in #13; all local community organizations we can network with.

15. How Did the Project Do Outreach Among the Targeted Population(s)?

The Board of Directors hired I. M. Heretohelp, a native Samoan speaker with a disability. She then hired a staff of native Samoan speakers with disabilities. We can get into almost anyplace the Samoan population gathers and promote our program.

16. What Changes Have Their Projects/Programs Made In People's Life And The Community? (if a brief case history can be provided that would be great)

During our first year we placed 125 people in employment positions. We estimate this impacts over 500 people if families are included. Each of these individuals will hopefully become taxpayers, not tax-drainers. They will also, we hope, take pride in their community and offer human and material resources to the development of Union City.
Myrna’s Story:

Myrna is a twenty-seven year old widow with Chronic Fatigue Syndrome. She has two elementary school age children. She married her high school sweetheart while living in Samoa. He died during her second pregnancy in a boating accident. Up until that time Myrna had been earning a living as a family caregiver. After her husband’s tragic accident, she decided to join her parents, who had emigrated to Union City five years before she did. She hoped they could assist with child care.

When Myrna arrived in Union City she knew no one but her parents. While attending a church service she learned about ESLEP. She decided to participate. She first attended our six-week intensive language course. She then enrolled in one of our job training seminars.

While attending a job training support group Myrna shared that she painted. We had just negotiated a working agreement with Noble Design, manufacturer of small knick-knacks for the gift shop market. We suggested Myrna apply to paint knick-knacks. She did and was hired seven months ago on a temporary basis. She could take knick-knacks home with her to paint at her own pace. She could also be home when her children returned from school and she could attend to the needs of her Chronic Fatigue Syndrome when it acted up.

After six months Myrna was hired as a permanent, full-time employee with full benefits. She still works at home. She’s thrilled to be working, taking care of her children, and even able to look for a larger apartment for her extended family.

17. How Have These Projects/Programs Increased Employment Opportunities For AAPI Consumers? Or Any Other Targeted Group Of Persons With Disabilities?

All of our program is designed to increase employment opportunities. We hope to double our placement rate in the next year to 250 clients who become employees.

18. What Didn’t Work Or What Problems/Barriers Still Need To Be Overcome, If Any?

Many employers still do not understand that people with disabilities and non-native speakers can be wonderful employers. We are discussing beginning a support group for employers and conducting job training programs for them as well.

19. What Changes Have Occurred In Your Program As A Result Of This Practice?

We search wherever we can for new employment training and placement ideas.