ECOLOGY ACTION - CALIFORNIA GREEN BUSINESS PROGRAM INTERNSHIP OFFERING

Background
The California Green Business Program was born in the San Francisco Bay area in 1995 with the goal of providing incentives and compliance/sustainability assistance to the hard to reach small to medium business sector to go green. Still operated out of local hubs, over twenty public agencies around the state operate local programs that work cooperatively statewide to maintain comparable standards and share centralized resources such as the California Green Business Program database that both runs the program operationally for applicants and auditors and promotes certified businesses. Businesses that achieve certification have been audited in person to confirm they are meeting compliance requirements and going beyond compliance to implement some practices in the areas of energy efficiency, water conservation, pollution prevention, air and water quality, waste reduction and resource conservation. The program is generally free or very low cost to the businesses, and in return for certification they can display their certification logo and are listed on the state database and in local promotions for their three year certification period.

Current Initiative and Intern Role
What started as a few local programs in the '90s grew into the California Green Business Program Network with growing statewide interest by the mid '00s. The Network was subsequently authorized and adopted by the state as the official State of California Green Business Program in 2011 (AB 913). AB 913 initially required CalEPA Department of Toxic Substances Control (DTSC) to support the California Green Business Program and its local program partners with staff and contract support, as they had in years prior before formalization. Due to budget constraints in 2011-2012, corrective legislation changed the requirement of “shall support” to “may support” after which CalEPA DTSC pulled all funding and staff support to the Program. Local green business programs have picked up the financial burden of supporting the program in lifeline mode. Without reinstated state support there is a risk the program will not stay afloat and can not realize the opportunity promised in AB 913, which is to accelerate a game-changing program to help transform the SMB market into a profitable, sustainable engine of the new California green economy.

The CAGBP is now actively working with legislators to author a bill or support a budget allocation that would provide reliable state baseline funding for centralized state efforts and launching the program in under/unserved regions in the State. The program is seeking a highly skilled intern to assist us in our legislative effort. The intern will be able to learn the ins and outs of how our legislative process works on the ground from a requestor/advocate perspective. The work at this time is expected primarily to be organizing, mobilizing and tracking business and environmental organizational support for our efforts. The intern would work under the guidance of two Ecology Action managers of the CAGBP and complete such tasks as:
- Coordinating with our 20 public agency local program coordinators as they solicit and recruit support from their participating businesses and agencies
- Develop and maintain a tracking document for supporting businesses, organizations and agencies and whether those agencies have sent in letters of support
- Electronically filing and compiling letters of support and providing them to CAGBP managers as needed to support legislative efforts including emailing them to assembly and senate budget committee staff
- Recruiting support for the program from statewide and national environmental and business organizations, sometimes pursuing leads provided by our local agency partners and some by researching and cold calling
- When appropriate from legislator perspectives and desired by intern, attend legislator and committee meetings beginning in February and March
- When appropriate and desired by intern, participate in CAGBP network meetings and calls, both in regards to the legislative effort and regular CAGBP business.
The intern could work remotely with reimbursement for telephone expenses. Ecology Action can also have drop in workspaces in our downtown Santa Cruz office that the intern could use. The CAGBP may have funds available to pay a portion of an hourly wage for the intern. It is estimated that the workload will be 8-10 hours per week, but could be more or less based on intern availability, interest and any additional ideas/tasks/goals the intern may have to add into the proposed workplan above. Please contact Kirsten Liske at kliske@ecoact.org, w: (831) 332-3619, c: (831) 332-3619