

Extension Education
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Rural Online Initiative
By Tasha Killian

We live in a rural community. It's a beautiful community that is quiet and quaint. One of the best things about living here is how small and tight-knit it is. However, with such a small community, there are some downsides. One of those is the lack of jobs, especially jobs with career opportunities and higher wages. For that reason, there's a high percentage of members in our community commuting to other places to work. In fact, you can probably name a few people that live by you who do just that. On top of those who commute to work, there's also those who wish they could stay in Juab County and raise their families here, but due to their chosen profession, they must move or feel they must move to another location for more opportunities. Like many counties in Utah, our rural community faces the dilemma of finding a way to expand and bring bigger job opportunities to the county, while still maintaining the small-town feel. Luckily for us, a solution was found in something called the Rural Online Initiative.

In the 2018 legislative session a bill was passed supporting the Rural Online Initiative. This initiative was created so that members who lived in rural communities could receive training, mentoring, and coaching to learn skills enabling them to work remotely. They do this by attending an online course entitled "Master Remote Professional Certification Course". This course is a month-long course, providing a certification at the end, which allows those looking to work remotely to earn specific skills needed for remote work. The course is usually \$99, but for those who live in Juab County, the course is free. You can register for this course online. The website is <https://remoteworkcertificate.com/>.

The skills learned in this course are skills like how to communicate effectively with supervisors while at a distance, how to build relationships with coworkers whom you may never meet in person, how to utilize technology to communicate effectively, how to use the skills you already have or build skills in computer literacy to be effective as a remote worker, and more. These skills are geared to be able to work effectively remotely and can be applied to different professions across the various fields. For example, a stay at home mom who may have skills in graphic design and want to begin freelance work to bring in extra income for her family, may decide that this course will be helpful for her so that she can learn to effectively communicate and build her relationships. An entrepreneur building an online business may want to take this course to build their skills so that they can better build their online business and use the skills they learn as they work in their business. Another student of the course may be a contracted worker with a company who is able to have employees perform their work remotely but needs employees who are able to communicate effectively and work with others from a remote location.

Whatever the situation and goal of the remote worker may be, the goal of the Master Remote Professional Certification Course is to provide the training to help meet those goals and provide them with enough confidence and a skill-set to be able to enter the remote workforce ready to take on that position. The Rural Online Initiative has providing education in many rural counties for the past year and we are now bringing it to Juab County. Stay tuned for a town hall

meeting hosted by the Rural Online Initiative faculty and staff. This town hall meeting is meant to answer questions, provide instruction and allow for sign ups on the spot. This opportunity will be a great asset to many in the county who may want to bring more income to the household by providing either an extra income or a new career opportunity. To find out more information you can contact the extension office or visit the Rural Online Initiative website at <https://remoteworkcertificate.com/about>. Juab County is a great place to live and through the Rural Online Initiative can be a great place to work remotely as well.