



south san francisco conference center

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GATEWAY CALIFORNIA

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JEANETTE BENSON is the Director of the Center for International Trade Development (CITD) with Merced College in Merced, California. The Merced CITD is one of five centers funded by the Economic and Workforce Development Program of the California Community Colleges to advance California's economic development and global competitiveness by providing quality training and services to small to medium sized enterprises that are potential or current exporters or importers and to assist faculty with internationalization of curriculum. The Merced CITD was first established in 1987 as The Agricultural Business and Trade Center (ABTC) growing from a need by farmers to find alternative markets for their products, ultimately becoming the model for the development of the statewide CITD Initiative. Ms. Benson has over 20 years experience providing trade training and technical assistance and is a NASBITE CGBP. She is the Immediate Past President of NASBITE International and has served on the NASBITE Board of Governors in a number of offices and was instrumental in the development of the NASBITE CGBP. Ms. Benson has a background in agriculture which further augments her understanding and commitment to serve the needs of stakeholders within her center's service region comprised of the San Joaquin Valley in Central California. In addition to the CITD program, Ms. Benson is the Director of the Youth Entrepreneur Program (YEP) serving youth age 14-26 with programs designed to get youth involved in starting their own business endeavor with international business as a focus and/or career consideration.