



NEWS RELEASE

Rural Development

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USDA ANNOUNCES \$1.5 MILLION IN COOPERATIVE AGREEMENTS WITH 1890 INSTITUTIONS Southern University Receives \$139,275

LORMAN, Mississippi, September 15, 2003— Agriculture Secretary Ann M. Veneman today announced the selection of eleven 1890 Land Grant Institutions, Colleges and Universities to receive nearly \$1.5 million in business development assistance. These funds will provide outreach and technical assistance in developing new businesses and employment opportunities in underserved rural communities.

“The Bush Administration is firmly committed to fostering new economic growth and expanding business opportunities in underserved rural communities,” said Veneman. “Today’s announcement broadens the resources provided through USDA to 1890 institutions for supporting local economic development efforts.”

Agriculture Under Secretary for Rural Development Thomas Dorr said the program is an important part of USDA efforts to help local communities during a town hall meeting here at Alcorn State University. “These funds will continue the strong partnership between USDA and these 1890 institutions like Alcorn State,” Dorr said.

Tuskegee University in Tuskegee, Ala. selected to receive \$150,000 for strengthening entrepreneurial and business development activities in the Alabama Black Belt Counties and other targeted communities of Sumter/Greene, Uniontown in Perry County, Lowndes, Macon, and Cherokee Tribe of Northeast Alabama.

University of Maryland-Eastern Shore in Princess Anne, Md. selected to receive \$100,000 to provide e-commerce and e-business information and technology for micro-businesses, cooperatives, micro-business associations and public bodies along the eastern shore of Maryland.

Southern University and A&M College in Baton Rouge, La. selected to receive \$139,275 to strengthen its outreach program in areas of job creation and retention opportunities. The four communities and parishes in the state of Louisiana selected are: East Feliciana, Iberville, St. Helena, and Tangipahoa.

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WITH 1890 INSTITUTIONS**

9/15/03

University of Arkansas-Pine Bluff in Pine Bluff, Ark. selected to receive \$150,000 intended to provide technical assistance for economic development, provide financial assistance to secure funding for businesses, and expand outreach efforts through the Institute for Rural Economic Development. Counties served: Ashley, Bradley, Chicot, Crittenden, Cross, Desha, Drew, Jefferson, Lee, Lincoln, Lonoke, Mississippi, Monroe, Phillips, St. Francis, and Woodruff.

Fort Valley State University in Fort Valley, Ga. selected to receive \$125,000 to provide individuals/groups with information, technical assistance and financial support for business startup or expansion, job creation, and program development designed to retain jobs. Counties served include: Crisp, Dooly, Macon, Peach, Crawford, and Taylor.

Delaware State University in Dover, Del. selected to receive \$150,000 to continue the Entrepreneurship Center's activities to impact business economic development by saving/creating jobs and to encourage business startups. The promotion of USDA Rural Development programs in targeted rural communities will be addressed.

Prairie View A&M University in Prairie View, Texas selected to receive \$135,000 to use for outreach, education and technical assistance in community and business development, youth entrepreneur education, business information system network and other web sites, and public/clientele awareness of Rural Development programs in 13 counties.

Alcorn State University in Alcorn, Miss. selected to receive \$140,000 for technical assistance to limited resource individuals in becoming successful entrepreneurs and provides training for local community leaders/elected officials for improvement in economic and community development. Additionally, the Center for Rural Life and Economic Development will be expanded which has service centers in Adams, Claiborne, Jefferson, Franklin and Wilkinson counties.

Langston University in Langston, Okla. selected to receive \$149,600 for strengthening minority-owned enterprises in rural communities, developing youth entrepreneurs, assisting and supporting community development and infrastructure improvements activities. Counties served include: Caddo, Carter, Garvin, Logan, McCurtain, McIntosh, Muskogee, Okfuskee, Okmulgee, Oklahoma, and Seminole.

West Virginia State College in Institute, W.Va. has been selected to receive \$136,125 to support business startup and technical assistance in 11-targeted counties. The project will focus on developing new companies, business planning for new enterprises, franchise startup, counseling, business expansion studies, marketing analysis, cash flow management and various seminars and workshops for small businesses.

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South Carolina State University in Orangeburg, S.C. selected to receive \$125,000 to provide business support services in 10 targeted counties. Also assist prospective entrepreneurs in creating new businesses, and providing small business management training to develop local youth into future entrepreneurs will be made available.

USDA Rural Development's mission is to deliver programs in a way that will support increasing economic opportunity and improve the quality of life of rural residents. As a venture capital entity, Rural Development provides equity and technical assistance to finance and foster growth in homeownership, business development, and critical community and technology infrastructure. Further information on rural programs is available at a local USDA Rural Development office or by visiting USDA's web site at www.rurdev.usda.gov.

The Louisiana Rural Development State Office is located at 3727 Government Street, Alexandria, Louisiana 71302, and the telephone number is (318) 473-7921. There are four area offices located throughout the state to serve Louisiana residents.

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