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Committed to the future of rural communities.

NEWS RELEASE

USDA RURAL DEVELOPMENT PROVIDES DOUGLAS COUNTY PUBLIC HEALTH SERVICES GROUP, INC. \$2,500,000 FOR WELLNESS CENTER

U.S. Representative Jo Ann Emerson joined USDA Rural Development State Director, Morris Westfall, to present a Mock Check in the amount of \$2,500,000 to the Douglas County Public Health Services Group, Inc. on Tuesday, October 14. The check represents a USDA Community Facility Direct Loan of \$2,000,000 and a Guaranteed Loan of \$500,000 through the Town and Country Bank for the construction of a new Wellness Center in Ava. The Wellness Center will be an extension to continued preventative health care through education and fitness.

“By minimizing risk and screening for early detection of a disease, preventative health care helps people live longer and healthier lives,” said U.S. Senator Kit Bond. “I commend the USDA and Ava community leadership for putting this important life-saving and cost-saving principle to work by investing in a new Wellness Center for local Missourians.”

“The health and wellness of citizens in rural communities is extremely important. Physical fitness is a key to long life and contributed greatly to the health of both body and mind. USDA Rural Development takes seriously our obligation to invest in the public health of our rural communities and I am very glad this opportunity is coming to Douglas County,” said U.S. Representative Jo Ann Emerson.

Carol Cunningham, President of the board of directors, expressed her appreciation, “The Board of Directors would like to thank Rural Development for funding the construction of this state-of-the-art wellness center which will allow extended health services from our Community Health Center. We will team our efforts with other area agencies and offer much needed education in the areas of health and fitness for residents of Ava and the surrounding area to keep active and reach healthy lifestyle goals.”

Westfall said, “This kind of assistance mirrors USDA Rural Development’s mission and President Bush’s initiative of being committed to the future of rural communities. Special thanks are extended to our federal elected officials including U.S. Senators Kit Bond and Claire McCaskill plus U.S. Representative Jo Ann Emerson for making available federal monies for funding this kind of project providing essential services for rural Missouri.”

Anyone seeking more information about this or any other USDA Rural Development program may visit the homepage at <http://www.rurdev.usda.gov/mo/> or by contacting Daniel Campbell, Area Specialist, at 3210 Hoover Drive, West Plains, MO 65775-3527 or by calling (417) 256-7117 extension 4 or by email to daniel.campbell@mo.usda.gov.

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