



NEWS RELEASE

USDA RURAL DEVELOPMENT PROVIDES MONETT R-1 SCHOOL DISTRICT \$37,000 GRANT

Monett R-1 School District received \$37,000 in a Mock Check ceremony August 1, 2007, at the new Southwest Area Career Center (SWACC). The USDA Rural Development Economic Impact Initiative Administrative (EIIA) Grant funds helped fund final architectural and engineering fees for the Career Center. It is an 86,000 sq. ft. single-level state-of-the-art facility equipped with the technology to provide quality workforce development programs. The facility serves 14 school districts in Lawrence, Barry, Christian, McDonald, Newton, and Stone counties.

“The Southwest Area Career Center expansion will aid the growing needs of local communities and strengthen the economy of southwest Missouri,” said U. S. Senator Kit Bond, who secured federal dollars for the project in previous years. “Today’s funds helped complete a critical project. Career and technical education is essential in ensuring that Missouri and America have a well-trained workforce to compete and succeed in the 21st century marketplace.”

Southwest Missouri Congressman Roy Blunt, who has worked to secure federal funding for it, said, “Post-secondary education and training and a strong work ethic are cornerstones of Southwest Missouri’s strong economy. The new Career Center in Monett is certain to strengthen the job skills required by local and rural businesses to compete in an expanding marketplace. The new education technologies the Center offers should prepare new workers for career opportunities that offer better paying jobs to support their families and neighborhoods. I am pleased to see the USDA taking an active role in this project.”

Superintendent Dr. Charles Cudney expressed his appreciation, “The new Southwest Area Career Center (SWACC) is crucial in order to provide the skilled workers necessary for the rapidly growing Southwest Missouri economy. This USDA Grant is very important in meeting our goal of constructing a state of the art facility that promotes rural economic development for many years into the future.”

Greg Branum, Missouri State Director for USDA Rural Development said, “Special thanks are extended to our federal elected officials for making available federal monies for funding this kind of project providing essential



Left to Right: Jim Orr, Mayor of Monett; Ted Dorton, Director of Southwest Area Community Center; Mark Coatney, school board member; Dr. Charles Cudney, Superintendent; Tony Rickard, President of school board; Jerry Roberts, School Board Member; David Rauch, District Director for U.S. Senator McCaskill; Dave Beckett, Vice President of school board; Stacy Burks, District Director for U.S. Senator Bond; Deborah Swarens, Assistant Superintendent; Steve McIntosh; Field Representative for Congressman Blunt ; Greg Branum, Missouri Rural Development State Director; Suzy McElmurry, Monett Chamber of Commerce; Tim Rickabaugh, Rural Development Area Director; Jim Hembree, Rural Development Manger.

services for the community.” Branum added, “This kind of assistance mirrors USDA Rural Development’s mission and President Bush’s initiative of being committed to the future of rural communities.”

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 Jim Hembree, Rural Development Manager, at 416 E. Airport Drive, Carthage, MO, 64836, or by calling (417) 358-8198 extension 4 or by email to jim.hembree@mo.usda.gov

“Committed to the future of rural communities.”

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