



Committed to the future of rural communities.

Minnesota — Rural Housing Service

Community Building

New Professional Building Means Rural Jobs in Elgin

Outline Of Need:

If you're looking to shatter any preconceived notions you might have about rural Minnesota, take a trip to Elgin, Minn., and spend some time with Dr. Julee Kingsley and Dr. Colleen Urbain. Kingsley, a dentist, and Urbain, a chiropractor, are young, female, wives, mothers and business owners who chose to locate their practices in a small town instead of an urban area. To both of them, rural Minnesota wasn't an obstacle, it was an opportunity.

"It's been a good move for me all around," Urbain said. "There's a lot of advantages to running your business in a small town."

How Rural Development Helped:

Urbain's and Kingsley's offices are next to each other in the Elgin Professional Building. The City of Elgin (population 1,089) recently used a \$396,000 loan from USDA Rural Development to purchase the building and renovate it to accommodate Kingsley's dentist office and keep Urbain in the community.

The Results:

Urbain employs three people and Kingsley employs five. Both

Fast Facts

Program: Community Facilities Program

Investment: \$396,000 loan

Partners: DEED, CEDA, People's Power Cooperative

Congressional District: MN-01

Demographics

- Southeast MN

Impact:

- Save 10 jobs
- Keep needed medical service in community
- Local economic development

Contact: Adam.Czech@mn.usda.gov



Dr. Julee Kingsley inside the Elgin Professional Building.

offices also have room to expand if needed. Kingsley started her practice in August of 2010 after graduating from the University of Minnesota's dental school and practicing as an associate in Rochester, Minn. for a couple of years. She grew up in Elgin and never had any doubts about returning to her small-town roots.

"There's such a need," she said. "I'm not worried about the business end of things. I knew this is what I wanted to do and where I wanted to be."

Too often we hear about young people with an entrepreneurial spirit leaving their small town for college or other opportunities and never returning. We don't hear enough about the Dr. Kingsley's and Dr. Urbain's of rural Minnesota.

Both are living proof that there is economic opportunity in rural areas, that the rural economy is more than traditional agriculture and manufacturing. Oh, and both are proof that living in a small town is fun, too.

"I see my old high school teachers and people I used to baby sit for coming in," Kingsley said. "It's so much fun. Sometimes I even see the 'babies' I used to baby sit for coming in with their own kids."

Take a walk with Urbain through her 1,500 square foot office – past the adjustment chairs, massage table and model of the human spine -- and you notice something else about this rural entrepreneur: Pride.

She's proud that people talk about her practice and that a lot of her business comes via word of mouth. "I draw from other small towns in the entire region," she said. "When you operate in a small town, word spreads quickly."

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