



NEWS RELEASE

United States Department of Agriculture • Rural Development
1400 Independence Avenue, S.W., Washington, DC 20250-0700

Phone: (202) 260-0996 • Fax: (202) 690-4083 TDD: (202) 720-6382 • Web: <http://www.rurdev.usda.gov>

Dane Henshall (202) 260-0996
Chad Padgett, Alaska State Director (907) 761-7705
Dean Stewart, Director, Business Programs, (907) 761-7722

USDA RURAL DEVELOPMENT ANNOUNCES \$11.5 MILLION IN RURAL BUSINESS GRANTS

Alaska's Central Council Tlingit and Haida Indian Tribes Receives \$192,600

WASHINGTON, June 5, 2008 – Agriculture Under Secretary for Rural Development Thomas C. Dorr has announced the selection of 70 rural communities and Native American organizations in 24 states to receive \$11.5 million in economic development grants. The Central Council Tlingit and Haida Indian Tribes of Alaska (CCTHIA) will receive \$192,600 from USDA Rural Development.

“These grants will help rural communities save or create more than 1,726 jobs and spur economic development,” Dorr said. “USDA is proud to work with local community leaders to help fund enterprises that improve the quality of life for rural residents.” Acting Rural Development Alaska State Director Chad Padgett noted that the CCTHIA grant will promote business development in Southeast Alaska and promote e-commerce. “USDA Rural Development has provided funds to Southeast Alaska communities in the past for broadband and for computer training facilities. This is another step in the effort to provide opportunities for rural Alaskans to develop the skills necessary to pursue job opportunities and establish new businesses,” Padgett said.

The funds are being provided through USDA Rural Development’s Rural Business Enterprise Grant (RBEG) and Rural Business Opportunity Grant (RBOG) programs. The RBEG program provides funding to support the establishment or development of small and emerging private businesses. The RBOG program finances training and technical assistance for business development.

For example, CCTHIA, with headquarters in Juneau, successfully started a small business development center in Angoon in late 2007. CCTHIA is receiving RBEG funds to continue the full-time small business development technician position in Angoon and provide additional funds to hire another technician to start a facility in Hydaburg. Both Angoon and Hydaburg are Tlingit villages with over 86% Native Alaskan populations. These positions provide technical assistance and e-commerce education to local entrepreneurs. CCTHIA will furnish one-on-one individual counseling to small businesses and potential business owners in areas such as pre-business planning start-up, developing business plans, and credit practices among others. Distance learning opportunities will also be available to support project.

Committed to the future of rural communities.

“USDA is an equal opportunity provider, employer and lender.”

To file a complaint of discrimination write USDA, Director, Office of Civil Rights, 1400 Independence Avenue, S.W., Washington, D.C. 20250-9410, or call (800) 795-3272 (voice), or (202) 720-6382 (TDD).

A complete list of grant recipients is available on the USDA Rural Development web site at www.rurdev.usda.gov. Funding for individual recipients is contingent upon their meeting the conditions of the grant agreement.

USDA Rural Development's mission is to increase economic opportunity and improve the quality of life for rural residents. Rural Development has invested more than \$90 billion since 2001 for equity and technical assistance to finance and foster growth in homeownership, business development, and critical community and technology infrastructure. More than 1.7 million jobs have been created or saved through these investments. Further information on rural programs is available at a local USDA Rural Development office or by visiting USDA's web site at <http://www.rurdev.usda.gov>.

#