



NEWS RELEASE

United States Department of Agriculture – Rural Development

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RECOVERY ACT AIDS JOB SEEKERS, EMPLOYERS IN SISKIYOU COUNTY

DAVIS, July 28, 2009 – Agriculture Secretary Tom Vilsack today announced Siskiyou Training and Employment Program, Inc. (STEP) of Weed will receive \$80,000 in grant funds for a job training program. In addition to these funds, 144 other recipients throughout the nation were selected to receive more than \$15.3 million to start or expand businesses in rural communities.

“These Recovery Act grants represent the Obama administration’s ongoing efforts to ensure strategic investments and increase economic opportunities in rural America,” said Vilsack. “Small businesses play an important role in building strong communities while providing vital products and services to local residents. This funding will help spur important economic development and strengthen communities in dozens of states around the country.”

STEP will use these funds to help expand their current Workplace Bootcamp program as well as develop a series of video and online courses. Topics will include professional workplace skills, intermediate and advanced computer skills and dealing with organization change. The funding is expected to help create a force of “hire-ready” employees for the small business community in the region and help lower the area’s high unemployment rates. Since 1971, STEP has delivered workforce development services assisting both job seekers and employers in Siskiyou County. It is anticipated that 100 people will participate in the program.

The funding announced today is being provided through USDA Rural Development’s Rural Business Enterprise Program (RBEG). RBEG funds can be used for start-up and working capital loans, building and plant renovations, transportation improvements, project planning and other business needs. Eligible applicants are nonprofit organizations, Native American tribes and public entities. More information is available at one of California’s 18 local USDA Rural Development offices or by visiting <http://www.rurdev.usda.gov/ca>.

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