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News Release

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ANGOLA'S RISE RECEIVES USDA SUPPORT

Angola (#02-21; 5-5-2002): USDA Rural Development announced today that Rehabilitation and Industrial Services Enterprise, Inc. (RISE) of Angola has been awarded a \$50,000 Rural Business Enterprise Grant.

The mission of RISE is to provide life and technology skills to individuals with developmental disabilities and their families so that they can fully participate in community life. RISE will use the funding to purchase equipment to support its training mission including needed office equipment and computer software including programs that are voice activated which are beneficial to individuals enrolled in training who are paralyzed by stroke, injury, or disability. RISE provides vocational training to individuals in Steuben, Lagrange, DeKalb and Noble counties.

Joseph Steele, USDA Rural Development Business Program Director, presented a check today for the grant to Joyce Hevel, RISE Executive Director, at a gathering at the RISE facility, 1600 Wohlert Street. Steele said, " USDA is pleased to support the commitment of RISE to provide individuals with an opportunity to develop their skills to the maximum extent. We also salute the determination of RISE's clients to pursue their dreams and make the most of their opportunities."

Incorporated in 1964 as a nonprofit corporation, RISE serves approximately 150 persons with disabilities in day vocational programs and placed 28 in area jobs last year. RISE

offers other services including Adult Day Activities at the Breeden YMCA, Activities of Daily Living Training, Geriatric Training, Job Placement, Supported Employment and Job Coaching. RISE is also the service provider for the Welfare to Work Program for Steuben, DeKalb and Lagrange counties placing nearly 40 persons in employment last year.

" Receiving this grant provides a wonderful opportunity for RISE to acquire much needed equipment ranging from a new copy machine, forklift, work benches and tools, portable wheelchair ramp, digital camera and other items that will enhance the work efficiency of services to individuals with disabilities," Havel said. " It is a very exciting time and will make our job more efficient. USDA is to be commended for their interest and involvement in improving the lives of citizens with disabilities in rural communities. I cannot thank USDA enough for its generous support and interest in the services of RISE and enhancing the quality of training through better equipment. Such an investment in individual lives pays off by allowing many of these people to be placed in jobs in the community, becoming tax paying, contributing citizens."

USDA's Rural Business Enterprise Grants assist public bodies and nonprofit organizations finance and facilitate development of small and emerging private businesses located in rural areas. Last year USDA awarded 10 Rural Business Enterprise Grants for over \$1.6 million to nonprofit organizations around Indiana. This grant to RISE is the most recent example of how USDA Rural Development is investing its resources in Steuben County. Since 1994, USDA Rural Development has invested nearly \$60 million in the county.

Single family home loans, rural rental housing, water and waste water disposal system funding, business and industry loans, and community facility loans and grants are financial resources available from USDA Rural Development. Questions concerning USDA Rural Development services in this area can be directed to USDA Rural Development, 104 East Park Drive, Albion, IN 46701-1437; phone 260-636-7682, extension 4.