



NEWS RELEASE

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Leavenworth-Jefferson Electric Cooperative, Inc. Receives USDA Rural Development Funding *Medical Building Built In Oskaloosa*

Oskaloosa, KS – USDA Rural Development State Director Chuck Banks today presented a ceremonial check totaling \$307,200 in USDA *Rural Economic Development Loan & Grant Program* funding to Leavenworth-Jefferson Electric Cooperative, Inc., (LJEC) of McLouth, KS, to support the construction of a new medical building by Medical Plaza, LLC in Oskaloosa. Today's ceremony represents USDA and LJEC's financing portion of this local community development project.

State Director Banks, commented during today's event, "Enhancing rural health care is vital to many Kansans and their communities. These important business development funds will help support improving local community and economic development opportunities for Jefferson and surrounding counties. The USDA loan, also supported by the technical assistance from LJEC and USDA Rural Development, underscores our Nation's continued commitment to rural Kansas."

Leavenworth-Jefferson Electric Cooperative, Inc. General Manager Steven Foss accepted the ceremonial check, representing a zero-interest loan for a ten year term, on behalf of the corporation. In thanking USDA Rural Development, Foss commented, "LJEC appreciates the opportunity to work with USDA Rural Development. The Agency has great programs, and this partnership helps create more good jobs. LJEC is committed to serving our rural communities."

Jim McGrath, Director of Jefferson County Economic Development said, "This opportunity adds so much to the scope of what we are able to do in rural Kansas. It is a tremendous asset to the fabric of a small community to be able to use the USDA Rural Development programs."

The loan will assist Medical Plaza, LLC with facility construction and purchase of equipment. This expansion will provide improved medical services to Jefferson County and the surrounding area, and will result in up to 6 new and/or retained local jobs. Holland Eye Clinic will be located in the new facility. Total cost of the project will be \$384,000, leveraged with a \$76,800 applicant contribution.

Banks further stated at the ceremony, "USDA Rural Development would like to thank LJEC for their continued participation in this excellent program. This USDA program is good for our communities, it is good for the Kansas economy, and it is good for rural Kansans working to create a better life."

Over the past five years, USDA Rural Development in Kansas has been a leading state in delivering economic development assistance through the Agency's *Rural Economic Development Loan & Grant Program*. In fact, since 1998, the program has assisted at least 91 businesses, created and saved over 2100 jobs, and provided over \$31 million in loans and grants across rural Kansas. Under USDA's *Rural Economic Development Loan & Grant Program*, the Agency will make a zero-interest loan to the local rural utility cooperative.

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Upon receipt of the loan proceeds, following execution of loan documentation and meeting the conditions of the Program, the cooperative will then pass the loan proceeds on to the local applicant to finance job creation efforts. Funds can be used for a variety of purposes, including community facilities and infrastructure, improving access to local medical care and other projects that encourage a favorable climate for job creation and economic growth.

USDA Rural Development's mission is to deliver programs that support increasing economic opportunities and enhancing the quality of life for rural Americans. USDA Rural Development provides equity and technical assistance to finance and foster growth in homeownership, business development, and critical community and technology infrastructure in rural America. Since 2001, USDA Rural Development has delivered over \$1.2 billion for Kansas covering all Agency programs, supporting well over \$6 billion in future economic development for the Sunflower State.

For additional information regarding USDA Rural Development and its programs, log onto the Agency's website at www.rurdev.usda.gov/ks or call the Agency's state office at 785-271-2700.

USDA Rural Development – *Committed to the Future of Rural Communities.*

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