



NEWS RELEASE

1303 SW First American Place, Suite 100, Topeka, KS 66604-4040

Voice (785) 271-2701, FAX (785) 271-2708, WEB www.rurdev.usda.gov/ks

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE – September 29, 2007

Contact - Harold Alford (785) 271-2701

KSU's Center For Engagement & Community Development Receives USDA Funding Approval *KSU & Three Other Kansas Applicants Receive Grants To Expand Local Economies and Create Jobs*

Manhattan, KS – USDA Rural Development State Director Chuck Banks today presented Kansas State University's Center for Engagement & Community Development with a ceremonial check for \$81,484 in Agency funding approved under the USDA's *Rural Community Development Initiative Grant Program*. Today's funding ceremony will support KSU and other Kansas partner's efforts to continue ongoing community development training and assistance to expand economic opportunities across the State.

"USDA Rural Development is committed to investing in the future of Kansas," commented State Director Banks in his announcement remarks. "Working together with KSU, other Kansas partners and the State's local communities, the Agency can help bring new economic opportunities to the Sunflower State, resulting in more good jobs and an improved quality of life for rural Kansans."

Fred Cholick, Dean of the College of Agriculture and Director of K-State Research and Extension said, "We are excited that the Center for Engagement and Community Development and its partners have been awarded this USDA Rural Community Development Incentive grant. Their project to develop community development coaches by training K-State Research and Extension professionals and economic development directors is an effective way to utilize an existing statewide network to extend and expand community development capacity."

KSU's Center for Engagement & Community Development will utilize the funds to develop community coaches (recipients) through a series of training. These coaches will in turn, work directly with rural eligible communities (beneficiaries) to provide community assessments, technical assistance, training and mentoring services to develop the beneficiary's capacity and ability to undertake more complex projects in housing, community facilities, business and economic development. The training/workshops will be held in three regions in Kansas. Other collaborating partners in this effort are the Kansas Department of Commerce and FHLBank of Topeka.

USDA Rural Development's *Rural Community Development Initiative Grant Program*, which has a dollar-for-dollar matching funds requirement, is made to an intermediary. The intermediary provides a program of technical assistance to recipients to build their capacity and ability to undertake projects related to housing, community facilities, and community and economic development for the benefit of rural communities.

During today's announcement, State Director Banks also announced the following three other business program funding awards for the State of Kansas:

Neosho County Community College in Chanute has received a grant of \$50,000 from the Agency's *Rural Business Opportunity Grant Program* to address local construction industry needs for a construction training program to produce skilled workers for the construction industries in SE Kansas in conjunction with Unified School District 413-Chanute. Instructors will be employed by the College and will provide instruction to both secondary and postsecondary students. USDA

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Rural Development funds will be leveraged by \$182,599 in other contributions for a total project cost to be \$232,599.

City of Parsons as been approved for a \$200,000 USDA Rural Development *Rural Business Enterprise Grant* to assist in the development of an industrial park within the city limits of Parsons. The City has a commitment from a small and emerging business that will locate in the industrial park and start by creating three new jobs with plans to grow to 25 employees.

Central Prairie Resources Conservation & Development, Inc. has also been approved for a USDA Rural Development *Rural Business Enterprise Grant* in the amount of \$49,000. Agency funding will be used to establish a revolving loan fund to provide financial assistance to small and emerging businesses in Barton County and other surrounding counties in Kansas. Projected number of jobs created and saved by this grant is 15. The applicant contribution will be \$1,000.

USDA Rural Development's mission is to deliver programs that support increasing economic opportunities and enhancing the quality of life for rural Americans. As a venture capital entity, 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 programs, interested parties may call the Agency's state headquarters at 785-271-2700 or log onto the state's USDA Rural Development website at: www.rurdev.usda.gov/ks

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

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