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# NEWS RELEASE

## USDA RURAL DEVELOPMENT PARTNERS WITH DAEOC TO CONSTRUCT NEW HEAD START FACILITY IN CARUTHERSVILLE

On Thursday, May 29, 2008, USDA Rural Development hosted a ground breaking ceremony with members of the Delta Area Economic Opportunity Corporation (DAEOC) to celebrate the start of construction for a new facility to house the DAEOC Head Start Program in Caruthersville. Rural Development has obligated \$839,000 in federal funds for the new, 9,482 square foot building to house the head start program that currently serves 120 children.

U.S. Senator Kit Bond stated, "I have long been a champion of early education programs like Head Start which help prepare our children for success in school. I commend the Caruthersville leadership and the USDA Rural Development staff for their hard work in making this new building a reality."

"Programs like Head Start give Missouri's children a better shot at success," said U.S. Senator Claire McCaskill. "I'm pleased this federal funding will help provide Caruthersville's kids with new and up-to-date facilities for a program that is so important to Missouri families."

The current head start facility in Caruthersville consists of modular building units with only three classrooms, thus requiring two separate sessions to have capacity for the current enrollment. The new building will accommodate the students with six classrooms, a new commercial-grade kitchen, laundry and janitorial service room as well as office space and an outdoor play area. The new facility will allow DAEOC to provide improved day care services to the Caruthersville area while continuing to provide a safe and stable environment for the children currently enrolled in the Head Start Program.

"I'm so proud that Head Start is going to have a brand new, permanent facility in Caruthersville. It just goes to show that, while the recovery process from a major disaster is long, we also have the patience and dedication to see it through to the end. Head Start gives our children tremendous opportunity to begin their education fully prepared to excel. I appreciate the fact that Rural Development shares my regard for this program and the men and women who make it so successful. I'll look forward to the completion of this new facility in Caruthersville," said U.S. Representative Jo Ann Emerson.

Adelia J. Barham, DAEOC Executive Director, stated, "DAEOC is delighted to be able to construct this new, state of the art Head Start facility in the City of Caruthersville, with the help of the USDA. We look forward to providing many years of continued child care learning experience for the area's youth."



On hand for the ground-breaking ceremony were several families that have children attending the current Head Start Program; Representative Terry Swinger; Ben Dyer representing Senator McCaskill's office; Mayor Diane Sayre and representatives from the following: USDA Rural Development; Delta Area Economic Opportunity Corporation (DAEOC); Wallace Architects; and Denali Construction

DAEOC is a community action agency serving Scott, Stoddard, Mississippi, New Madrid, Dunklin and Pemiscot Counties in southeast Missouri. DAEOC is a not-for-profit corporation that has successfully operated Head Start Programs since 1974. DAEOC is governed by a board composed of 18 persons consisting of equal numbers of private sector, public sector, and low-income representatives. This organizational structure brings together local community leaders from each of the representative groups to respond to specific community needs. DAEOC forms a network of resources and individuals all united under the self-help principal of creating community solutions to community problems.

“The intent of the Community Facility Program is to assist rural communities with financial packages to enhance the quality of life for rural Americans,” said Morris Westfall, Missouri State Director for USDA Rural Development. “It is very rewarding to partner with DAEOC for such a worthwhile cause. We at Rural Development are extremely pleased to have such a successful relationship with an entity that has proven to be beneficial to so many rural Americans.”

The funding awarded to DAEOC from USDA Rural Development originates from the Community Facilities Direct Loan program. This program is specifically designed for municipalities, counties or non-profit organizations that cannot finance projects from their own resources or through commercial credit at reasonable rates and terms. The loan purpose is to construct, enlarge, extend or otherwise improve essential community facilities.

Further information regarding Community Facility loans or any of the USDA Rural Development programs is available by contacting Phyllis Minner at the Dexter Rural Development Office at [phyllis.minner@mo.usda.gov](mailto:phyllis.minner@mo.usda.gov) or by calling 573-624-5939, ext. 4. Rural Development’s web site is: [www.rurdev.usda.gov/mo](http://www.rurdev.usda.gov/mo).

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