



# NEWS RELEASE

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## USDA RURAL DEVELOPMENT PROVIDES FUNDS FOR YOUTH BUSINESS CONFERENCE

Greg Branum, Missouri State Director for USDA, presented \$9,000 to Northwest Missouri State University in a Mock Check Ceremony on September 5, 2007. The funds provided through USDA Rural Development's Rural Business Enterprise Grant program will be used to organize and conduct a youth business conference to be held in Chillicothe, MO.

The youth business conference is being organized through the efforts of the Small Business Development Centers located in Maryville and Chillicothe. The conference will assist individuals in the 20 county area in Northwest Missouri with starting their own businesses.

The \$9,000 grant was made through USDA Rural Development's Rural Business Enterprise Grant Program. This program is available to finance and facilitate development of small and emerging business enterprises in rural areas.

"Today's announcement highlights the local commitment and the leadership of the USDA Rural Development staff. They are to be commended for their dedication and hard work in making this project a reality. The entire community will benefit from these efforts," said U.S. Senator Kit Bond.

"I'm so pleased that these federal grant dollars are coming to Missouri," U.S. Senator Claire McCaskill said. "Because of this grant, Missouri's young people will have the opportunity to learn more about the world of business."

"Small businesses are the backbone of our economy," said Congressman Sam Graves. "This conference will further influence a new generation of leaders and innovators. Economic development is essential to maintaining our rural way of life."

"This kind of assistance mirrors USDA Rural Development's mission and President Bush's initiative of being committed to the future of rural communities," said Branum. "Appreciation is



Pictured from left to right: Jeremy Brady, Rural Development Manager; Shelby Hendee, Cameron Economic Development Director; Dean Brookshier, Deputy Chief of Staff for U.S. Congressman Sam Graves; Rebecca Evans, Director, Small Business Development Center, St. Joseph; Steve Holt, Director, Small Business Development Center, Chillicothe; Brooke Assel, Cameron High School; Frank Veeman, Director, Small Business Development Center, Maryville; Skylar Karr, Cameron High School; Marcia Cunningham, Brookfield Economic Development Director; Neal Miller, Area Director Rural Development; Jamie Dancer, Cameron High School; A J Blackmon, Cameron High School; Greg Branum, State Director Rural Development

extended to our federal elected officials for supporting USDA Rural Development. They have been strong proponents for the necessary funding for essential services for rural Missourians.”

Anyone interested in obtaining information regarding assistance available through USDA Rural Development may visit the homepage at <http://www.rurdev.usda.gov/mo/> or can contact Jeremy E. Brady, Rural Development Manager, at the Maryville Local Office of USDA Rural Development at 502 W. South Hills Drive, Suite 103, Maryville, Missouri 64468 or by calling 660-582-7421 (extension 4).

**“Committed to the future of rural communities.”**

**“USDA is an equal opportunity provider, employer and lender.”**

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