



# NEWS RELEASE

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## USDA RURAL DEVELOPMENT INVITES APPLICATIONS FOR DISTANCE LEARNING AND TELEMEDICINE GRANTS

**TEMPLE, TEXAS, January 13, 2009** - Acting Agriculture Under Secretary for Rural Development Douglas L. Faulkner announced today that USDA is accepting applications for grants through the Distance Learning and Telemedicine (DLT) Grant Program to provide access to education, training and healthcare resources in rural areas. Funding for the program is subject to Congressional appropriations.

“These grants will increase the range of educational opportunities available to students in rural communities and improve access to healthcare for countless numbers of rural Americans,” Faulkner said. “The DLT program provides increased economic opportunity by expanding telecommunications, educational resources and computer networks throughout rural America.” In 2008, USDA Rural Development provided grants totaling \$28.2 million under the program to 105 recipients in 41 states.

“Distance learning and telemedicine systems are powerful tools for rural Texas,” said Scooter Brockette, USDA Rural Development Texas Acting State Director. “Through technology, students and families can participate in classes not previously available to them, and people who live in rural areas can access expanded health care options.”

Complete applications must be received by March 24. For further details about eligibility rules and application procedures, see the December 24, 2008, *Federal Register*, page 79041. Materials including an application guide and full details about the program can also be obtained at [www.usda.gov/rus/telecom/dlt/dlt.htm](http://www.usda.gov/rus/telecom/dlt/dlt.htm) or by calling the DLT program at 202-720-0413.

USDA Rural Development strives to see that rural citizens can participate fully in the global economy by providing technical assistance, funding, and other programs that help rural Americans build strong economies to improve their quality of life. For further information regarding USDA Rural Development Programs, contact the State Office at (254) 742-9700 or visit our website at <http://www.rurdev.usda.gov/tx/>.

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