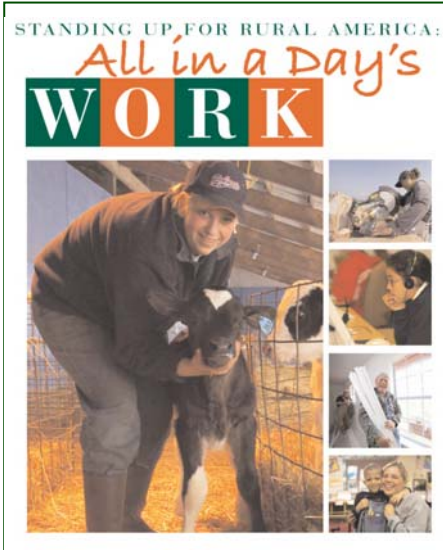


About *Stand Up for Rural America*



BACKGROUND: 49 million people live in rural America. Despite declines in poverty, 340 of the 386 poorest counties are rural. At 14.2%, the national rural poverty rate exceeds the metropolitan rate by nearly three percentage points. Before *Stand Up for Rural America*, no one knew how many community developers were addressing the challenges confronting rural towns and counties. No one had documented where these grassroots groups work, the activities they undertake or what they achieve. As a result, rural community developers were receiving less attention, fewer resources and less policy support than their urban counterparts. To learn more about the challenges and opportunities, and what community developers are doing to meet them, read *Standing Up for Rural America: All in a Day's Work, A Place in the Country* and *Unharvested Bounty*.

CAMPAIGN PURPOSE & GOALS: *Stand Up for Rural America* is a national coalition initiative, with 750 sponsors, dedicated to helping rural community developers gain the attention, resources, and policy support their work deserves.

The Campaign focuses on four specific goals: securing funding for the Rural Community Development Initiative (RCDI) -- the first capacity building program for community developers in USDA; launching a Rural Funders Group in the Council on Foundations to increase rural philanthropy; stimulating significant private investment in rural community development; and organizing an umbrella network of rural community developers to continue educating funders, lenders and policy makers.

More recently, *Stand Up* added three items to its action agenda: enacting a "rural friendly" federal home ownership tax credit for investors; helping preserve existing Community Reinvestment Act regulations applicable to rural areas; and supporting efforts of The Congressional Rural Caucus to secure a more comprehensive, better coordinated federal rural policy.

TANGIBLE RESULTS:

✓ *Federal Funding for Rural Community Development Initiative (RCDI)*

More than \$36 million has been appropriated from FY 2000-2005 in the USDA budget.

✓ *Increased Foundation Attention and Support*

There is an active Rural Funders Working Group in the Neighborhood Funders Group of the Council on Foundations. It helped foster a \$100 million National Rural Funders Collaborative now making a second round of grants. It also sponsors meetings, site visits, a newsletter, a listserv, and a "Rural 101" training curriculum for funders.

✓ *More Private Investment*

Better than \$138.7 billion has been invested, mainly by Fannie Mae and Bank of America, but also by LISC's National Equity Fund, Rural Opportunities, Inc. (ROI), and ROI's partners.

✓ *A Rural Community Developers Network*

The Campaign has organized a *Network* with 1,727 grassroots members. They receive a biweekly *Network Reporter* containing information on funding and financing opportunities, policy issues, training and other resources.

✓ *A Congressional Rural Caucus*

Inspired by *Stand Up*, U.S. Representatives Eva Clayton (D-NC, retired) and Jo Ann Emerson (R-MO) restarted the bipartisan Congressional Rural Caucus (CRC), dedicated to insuring that rural communities receive their fair share of federal resources and policy support. Current co-chairs are U.S. Representatives John Peterson (R-PA) and Allen Boyd (D-FL).

KEY ACTIVITIES:

★ Recruiting 750 Sponsors from 49 states ★ Organizing a 39 person Steering Committee ★ Conducting the 1st comprehensive survey of rural community developers ★ Publishing the 1st Directory of Rural Community Developers ★ Conducting a follow up survey ★ Updating the Directory ★ Organizing three national *Stand Up for Rural America* Days ★ Supporting a dozen State *Stand Up* Days ★ Organizing the 1,727 member Rural Community Developers Network ★ Publishing the biweekly Reporter distributed to this Network ★ Developing and distributing a video, documentary film, three publications and three photo exhibits ★ Persuading 123 PBS stations, reaching 43% of the national television audience, to broadcast the documentary film ★ Helping conduct the second comprehensive survey of rural community developers ★

MAJOR PRODUCTS:

- ✓ The first and revised editions of the “**Directory of Rural Community Developers**,” summarizing national survey results and listing, describing, and mapping survey respondents, organized by state (available online at www.ruralamerica.org).
- ✓ “**Unharvested Bounty**,” a magazine describing and analyzing the challenges facing rural communities and what grassroots groups are doing to address them.
- ✓ “**Rural Communities Creating Opportunity**,” a Council on Foundations prize winning 24-minute video, produced by Appalshop, Inc., showing how rural grassroots developers from diverse distressed areas change peoples’ lives, and a related **Photo Exhibit**.
- ✓ “**A Place in the Country**,” a film by The Center for Rural Strategies, Appalshop, Inc., and Rural LISC documenting seven community developers’ work from Maine to California and South Dakota to Texas, featuring interviews with U.S. Senators Tom Daschle (D-SD) and Kit Bond (R-MO), U.S. Representatives Jo Ann Emerson (R-MO) and Eva Clayton (D-NC, retired), and Robert E. Rubin, Director and Chairman of the Executive Committee at Citigroup. **A companion magazine** explores rural challenges and trends, what community developers are doing to meet them, new rural markets and philanthropic opportunities and where the gaps in federal rural development policy lie.
- ✓ “**Rural Communities: Helping the Country Work**,” a photo exhibit and CD-ROM portraying the work of 14 community developers and the challenges these and their colleagues face.
- ✓ “**Standing Up for Rural America: All in a Day’s Work**,” a photo essay and exhibit showing what rural community developers do each day to make America a stronger, better place.

SUPPORTERS:

Arizona Community Foundation	National City Bank CDC
Bank of America*	National Congress for Community Economic Development
The Center for Rural Strategies	National Equity Fund
Fannie Mae*	Northeast South Dakota Economic Corporation
Fannie Mae Foundation*	Once for All Trust*
Federal Home Loan Banks*	The Pew Charitable Trusts*
Federal Home Loan Mortgage Corporation (Freddie Mac)	Rural LISC*
First Union Corporation (Now Wachovia)*	State Farm [®] *
FleetBoston Financial (Now Bank of America)*	Wachovia Foundation*
Ford Foundation*	Mr. and Mrs. Robert Warwick*
Freddie Mac	Washington Mutual*
Human Resources Development Council	Wells Fargo
KeyBank*	W.K. Kellogg Foundation*
Local Initiatives Support Corporation (LISC)*	
Meyer Memorial Trust	

* Multiple contributions

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