

Stand Up for Rural America - Rural Community Developers Network Reporter

Volume 5, Number 23 December 15, 2003

STAND UP CAMPAIGN UPDATE

The fifth National Congress for Community Economic Development (NCCED) Census of Community-Based Development Organization is being designed. The campaign has sent a list of some 3,700 potential rural community developers to NCCED, including 1,798 Network members, and will be working hard to maximize rural responses so we can update the "Directory of Rural Community Developers," compile rural data and tell your story in a more compelling way. Watch this space for more information! Meantime, Happy Holidays to All! Our next issue will be published in mid-January, 2004.

POLICY UPDATE

The remaining FY 04 appropriations bills, including those for USDA and U.S. HUD are not likely to be enacted until after Congress returns in January. The best guess now is that the omnibus bill covering most of the domestic budget will be considered shortly after January 20, 2004.

FUNDING AND FINANCING OPPORTUNITIES

Intel Corporation, Scholastic Administrator, and the Blue Ribbon Schools of Excellence Foundation will award more than \$200,000 next year in a new program honoring K-12 schools. The 21st Century Schools of Distinction Award Twenty awards will be given in several categories. The deadline is December 31. For more information, visit <http://www.blueribbonsschools.com/award>.

The American Association of University Women's Community Action Grants program provides seed money to individual women, AAUW branches, AAUW state organizations, and community-based nonprofit organizations. Grants will be made in the amount of **\$5,000 to \$10,000**. The deadline is January 15. For more information, visit www.aauw.org.

The John D. and Catherine T. MacArthur Foundation has announced a \$50 million initiative to preserve and improve affordable rental housing. The Window on Opportunity initiative will provide grants and low-cost loans to nonprofit developers and lenders. Over the next five years, the effort aims to ensure the acquisition and renovation of 100,000 affordable rental units in cities, suburbs, and rural areas. For more information, visit www.macfound.org/announce/press_releases/11_13_2003.htm.

As part of ongoing outreach to rural communities across the nation, The Robert Wood Johnson Foundation is offering Faith in Action grants to help persons of all ages with long-term health conditions. Faith in Action provides grants of up to \$35,000 along with technical assistance to community coalitions working on a common mission to provide volunteer care to their neighbors in need. The deadline is February 1. For more information, visit <http://www.fiavolunteers.org/funding/index.cfm>

The National Endowment for Financial Education (NEFE) is accepting proposals assessing retirement preparation resources for the self-employed and preparing low-income women for retirement. For the first one, proposals should identify resources supporting retirement planning for the self-employed, and identify barriers and solutions to help the self-employed prepare for retirement. The second proposal will development basic financial materials directed at older low-income women who have not prepared for retirement. NEFE has three grant cycles in 2004. The first deadline is February 3. For more information, visit www.nefe.org/pages/grantrfps.html.

The Rural Community Assistance (RCA) grant program assists communities affected economically from loss of jobs or income derived from forestry, forest-related industry, or dependence on National Forest or Grasslands resources. The program is administered by the USDA Forest Service and is available in the following states: Idaho, Utah, Wyoming, Montana, Nevada, and North Dakota. **Grants up to \$5,000 are available for community planning and up to \$20,000 for implementation of projects** in a community plan. There is no deadline for applications. For more information, visit <http://www.fs.fed.us/r1-r4/spf/grants/index.html>.

TRAINING EVENTS AND CONFERENCES

The 17th Annual Rural Health Care Leadership Conference of the American Hospital Association will be held in Scottsdale, AZ January 11 - 14, 2004. For more information, visit www.hospitalconnect.com/healthforum/hfeducation/ruralhealth.html or call 773 622-5648.

The Council for Affordable and Rural Housing (CARH) will hold its 2004 Mid Year Meeting in Scottsdale, AZ January 25 - 27, 2004. For more information, visit <http://www.carh.org/meetsched.asp> or call 703 837-9001.

The Center for Rural Entrepreneurship will hold a "Train-the Trainers" academy on February 24-26 in Omaha. Home Town Competitiveness A Blueprint for Community Builders. Information and registration forms are available at www.heartlandcenter.info or call 800 927-1115.

INFORMATION AND OTHER RESOURCES

Persistent Poverty and Place: How Do Persistent Poverty Dynamics Vary Across the Rural-Urban Continuum? By Kathleen K. Miller, Bruce A. Weber, is available in Measuring Rural Diversity, Volume 1, Issue No. 1, November 2003. The report may be downloaded at http://srdc.msstate.edu/measuring/series/miller_weber.pdf.

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Poverty in the Rural South by the Southern Rural Development Center discusses the disproportionate share of Southern rural children living in poverty. It includes historical perspective on the economy and access to education in the South, particularly for African American, Latino and Native American children and families. The report discusses policy considerations for improving the status of children in the rural South. Download the report at http://srdc.msstate.edu/publications/srdcpolicy/harris_zimmerman.pdf.

Rural Schools Score Above Average in Most States, But Too Many Rural Teens Forgo College. Tom Loveless, Brookings Institution, 2003. This is the fourth edition of the Brown Center Report on American Education and includes information on rural schools, www.brookings.edu/gs/brown/bc_report/2003/2003report.htm.

The USDA's Economic Research Service has released the 2003 Urban Influence Codes, which classify U.S. counties by size of each county's largest town and nearness to metropolitan and micropolitan areas. This allows

researchers to break county data down into smaller residential groups than metro, micro, and nonmetro. This is particularly useful for the analysis of trends in nonmetro areas that are related to population density and metro influence. The codes divide the Nation's 3,141 counties, county equivalents, and independent cities into 12 groups. See <http://www.ers.usda.gov/Data/UrbanInfluenceCodes/>

Your Field Guide to Community Building is a new publication by the Heartland Center for Leadership Development. There are lessons from more than 40 practitioners. The result is a tune-up for troubleshooting and problem solving for community developers. The publication includes a CD with practitioner interviews. There is also an interactive web site. Visit www.heartlandcenter.info/fieldguide for more information, or purchase the publication online at www.heartlandcenter.info/publications.htm

The Association for Enterprise Opportunity (AEO) is encouraging holiday purchases from Micro Enterprises. Their website <http://microenterpriseworks.org/projects/buyme/index.htm> includes tools for launching local campaigns and a directory.

Send information on funding opportunities, events, publications, resources or rural related policy issues to: reporter@ruralamerica.org. Announcements will be published at our discretion based on space and applicability. To receive the Network Reporter by email contact us at: info@ruralamerica.org.

