



Stand Up for Rural America

Rural Community Developers Network Reporter

March 2, 2009

Stand Up Update

Time Is Of The Essence. There are many, many program components in the American Recovery and Reinvestment Act (ARRA, the final version of the Stimulus Bill). There are thousands of eligible applicants, including rural community developers. The Obama Administration is forging full steam ahead. Vice President Biden is charged with making sure the money is used wisely and well and is put to work ASAP. He's making every agency submit weekly progress reports. Results are being posted on the internet at www.recovery.gov.

To maximize your organization's participation in Stimulus delivery, here's what we recommend:

- ✓ **Find and scan through a good summary of the legislation**, e.g., NACO has one at <http://www.naco.org/Template.cfm?Section=Publications&template=/ContentManagement/ContentDisplay.cfm&ContentID=30055>.
- ✓ **Look** most carefully at **agencies and programs** which **have proven useful in the past** and/or are **relevant to your current plans** and developments;
- ✓ For programs covered in the legislation, **determine whether your group has any application(s) planned or pending** or has been turned down recently due to lack of funds;
- ✓ **Identify** any other **priority program prospects**;
- ✓ **Write a brief summary of how your group proposes to use ARRA funds**, including project purpose and location, amounts needed, when you can start, when you will finish and community benefits;
- ✓ If you have a good working relationship with a specific program staffer, contact him or her and send along your summary, asking about whether it makes sense for your group to apply, and what the process and timetable for applications is;
- ✓ If you don't relate to a specific staffer, contact the nearest program supervisor (you may want to copy your US Senators and Representatives); and
- ✓ Follow up, follow up, follow up, including regular visits to recovery.gov and Federal Register.gov to make sure you don't miss any relevant NOFAs or RFPs.

Policy Update

Budget Numbers, Numbers, Numbers! The Obama Administration budget proposal is out, summarizing key directions by department and agency. To see this document, go to <http://www.whitehouse.gov/omb/budget/>. However, there are no line item funding requests by program and probably won't be until April after all the US Representatives and Senators submit their "special requests" aka earmarks. Stay tuned...

Hats off to US Senator Mary Landrieu (D-LA)! She just issued a report detailing results of a nine month investigation into federal housing assistance after Hurricanes Katrina and Rita with 10 key recommendations on how future disasters should be handled. To see the press release and find a link to the report, to <http://landrieu.senate.gov/releases/09/2009226C39.html>.

Funding and Financing Opportunities

2009 NANCY NYE FELLOWSHIP IN RURAL COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT. Sponsored by the Carsey Institute, the application deadline is **March 15, 2009**. Eligible applicants include rural community development practitioners, research and evaluation professionals, and students at the graduate level and above. More information is available at http://www.raconline.org/funding/funding_details.php?funding_id=2075.

HELP AT-RISK YOUTH! grants are offered for youth programs by the ESA Foundation to nonprofit and public agencies. The deadline for applications is **April 15, 2009**. Funding is awarded to support geographically diverse projects and programs that benefit American youth of all races, religions and genders. For more information go to <http://www.theesa.com/foundation/application.asp>.

THE COCA-COLA FIRST GENERATION SCHOLARSHIP is offered to American Indian students who are the first in their immediate family to pursue a higher education at a tribal college or university. The deadline for applications is **May 31, 2009**. Learn more at http://www.raconline.org/funding/funding_details.php?funding_id=1563.

Training Events and Conferences

2009 Rural Education Working Group (REWG) national meeting is scheduled for April 19-21 at the Kanuga Conference Center near Hendersonville, North Carolina. The theme this year is “Healthy Rural Schools, Healthy Rural Communities” and will bring rural people together from around the country who are advocates for their rural communities and schools. If you are interested, go to http://www.ruraledu.org/site/c.beJMIZOCIrH/b.4814967/k.53E2/Rural_Education_Working_Group_2009.htm

American Association of Homes and Services for the Aging (AAHSA) will hold an aging services conference & exposition April 20-22, 2009 at the Marriott Wardman Park Hotel in Washington, DC. For more information and to register go to <http://www.aahsa.org/fasc/>.

9th Annual Asset Management Professionals’ Conference will take place April 22-24, 2009 at the Sheraton Gunter Hotel in San Antonio, Texas. This is a professional development and networking event devoted solely to building the capacity of affordable housing asset managers. For more information, go to <http://www.lisc.org/content/calendar/detail/7812/>.

The Housing Development Corporation of Lancaster, PA annual meeting “The Faces of Affordable Housing” will be held May 13, 2009 at 5:30 PM at the Marriott Lancaster at Penn Square in Lancaster, PA. For more information, go to <http://www.hdcweb.com/index.htm>.

Information and Other Resources

RURAL BROADBAND AT A GLANCE, 2009 EDITION. Broadband Internet access is becoming essential for both businesses and households; many compare its evolution to other technologies now considered common necessities—such as cars, electricity, televisions, microwave ovens, and cell phones. Although rural residents enjoy widespread access to the Internet, they are less likely to have high-speed, or broadband, Internet access than their urban counterparts. To read more, see <http://www.ers.usda.gov/Publications/EIB47/>.

An article in the *Catholic Sentinel* features a “rolling café” operated by St. Vincent de Paul Society in Portland, Oregon used to reach rural poor people experiencing hard times. The café is a retrofitted school bus that travels to various communities to provide free meals. For more, go to <http://www.sentinel.org/node/9836>.

The PEW Research Center reports that one in five homeowners feels “underwater” on their mortgage. They surveyed 1,303 homeowners and found that those who feel underwater are generally younger, less affluent and more likely to be Hispanic or African American than are those who feel they would at least break even if they had to sell today. Read the full report at <http://pewresearch.org/pubs/1128/homeowners-mortgage-underwater>.

“Access to Healthy Foods in Low-Income Neighborhoods: Opportunities for Public Policy” documents that low-income people, minorities, and rural residents often have the highest rates of preventable, diet-related diseases that are linked to insufficient consumption of healthful foods. To get the report, go to www.yaleruddcenter.org/resources/upload/docs/what/reports/RuddReportAccessToHealthyFoods2008.pdf.

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.

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