

## Keynotes for Communities June 2009



**INITIATIVE  
FOUNDATION**

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### Workshops & Conferences

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#### **Alternative Energy Sessions for Businesses**

*Only one more session left!*

*June 9, 2009*

*9AM-12PM*

*The Lodge, Baxter*

Are you a business owner looking for ways to stretch your operations dollar?  
Are you interested in learning more about alternative energy technologies?  
Want to know the ROI of alternative energy technologies?  
Looking for alternative energy resource information?

Join us and your peers to learn about these opportunities and to discuss how we can work together to move our region's alternative energy industry forward!

[Learn more...](#)

#### **After You, Then Who?**

##### **The Benefits of Boards & Succession Planning**

*Friday, June 12, 2009*

*9:00AM-1:00PM*

*Initiative Foundation, Little Falls*

Because of your partnership with the Initiative Foundation and Anderson Center, we are offering you complimentary seats at our fast-paced, interactive workshop that explores two of the most critical trends in Minnesota business.

- **Board Governance** - In this economic recession, many banks and investors are now requiring businesses to form advisory or governing boards that provide external advice on management decisions. Learn how to recruit a valuable board of directors and tap its power.
- **Succession Planning** - What if something happens to you? Today, less than 25% of businesses successfully transition ownership from one generation to the next. Learn the elements of a sound succession plan that ensures your business survival, preserves jobs, and preempts legal conflicts.

Deadline: June 4, 2009.

Register today by contacting Sharon Gottwalt at 877-632-9255 or [sgottwalt@ifound.org](mailto:sgottwalt@ifound.org). Attendance is limited to 50. Includes a complimentary networking lunch!

#### **The 2009 Minnesota Critical Access Hospital and Rural Health Conference: Rethinking Rural Health Care: A Community Effort**

*June 15-16, 2009*

*Duluth*

The brochure and online registration is at [www.health.state.mn.us/divs/orhpc/conf/2009/index.html](http://www.health.state.mn.us/divs/orhpc/conf/2009/index.html) or contact Sally Trnka at (218) 727-9390 ext 233 or [stnka@ruralcenter.org](mailto:stnka@ruralcenter.org). **REGISTER by June 5.**

### **Save-the-Date for Future Nonprofit Workshops!**

All the workshops are free of charge, but preregistration is needed. The ones held at the Kelly Inn will have only a meal cost of \$10 if people wish to have lunch while they learn. More information will be on our website under nonprofits/news and notes as dates get closer.

- **Dissect the Frog** - Date: June 11 - 11:45 - 1:15; Location: Kelly Inn; Presenter: Brian Myres ING; Session Summary: Dissect the Frog is a process by which an organization dissects its operations. The process encourages staff to talk about certain procedures and explore if efficiencies can be gained by changing the way business is done. Dissect the Frog makes organizations take a series look at how to do business better and more productively. Brian Myres of ING Direct will be the guest speaker as he has led the Dissect the Frog process in many local organizations along with divisions within ING Direct.
- **Leadership Transitions** - Date: September 17 - 11:45 - 1:15; Location: Kelly Inn; Panel presentation; Session Summary: the board's role in time of transition.
- **Technology** - Date: December 10 - 11:45 - 1:15; Location: Kelly Inn; Session Summary: a look at fundraising, database and accounting software for small and medium sized organizations.

Please Email, mail, or fax your RSVP to: LarsonAllen LLP, Attn: Janelle Steil, PO Box 1067, St. Cloud, MN 56302, email: [jsteil@larsonallen.com](mailto:jsteil@larsonallen.com), Phone: 320-203-5617, Fax: 320-253-7696

### **Community Gardens Meeting**

*June 17, 2009*

*10AM – 12PM*

*Region Five Development Commission, Staples*

Discussion of current community garden initiatives, future garden plans, resources available, potential collaborative efforts, and how Region Five can assist. For more detailed information or directions, please call (218) 894-3233.

### **National Rural Electric Cooperative Association 2009 Regional Professional Development Conference, *Save Energy! Save Your Community!***

*June 24 – 25, 2009*

*Great River Energy, Maple Grove*

Conference agenda and registration form available online at <http://www.nreda.org>.

### **Recession-Year Financial Leadership**

*Thursday, September 10, St. Paul*

Illuminate the key decisions, choices and strategies that you should consider in key areas such as recession-preparedness, budgeting approaches for uncertain times, fundraising expectations and priorities, communications and community, [and more](#). **Recession-Year Financial Leadership** will provide you with analytical tools, templates and talking points to lead your organization, and join forces with partner organizations, in this most difficult year.

This workshop will be presented by Kate Barr (Executive Director, [Nonprofits Assistance Fund](#)) and Jon Pratt (Executive Director, [Minnesota Council of Nonprofits](#)). For workshop details including content, pricing, and registration information, visit [http://www.mncn.org/event\\_leadership.htm#recession](http://www.mncn.org/event_leadership.htm#recession).

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## **Funding Opportunities**

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**AgStar has grants available for rural feasibility studies** and is Now Accepting Applications AgStar Fund for Rural America is now offering grants up to \$5,000 for feasibility studies resulting in economic development for rural areas. These funds are designed to provide funding to determine the feasibility of a project or to plan for a project located in rural areas of AgStar's service area. Projects eligible for funding will need to meet an economic development or sustainability objective and, if implemented, will create new permanent jobs that result in the economic development of a rural area. The AgStar Fund for Rural America was created to demonstrate our support for agriculture and the rural communities within our service area. The trustees established the fund's mission as "Committed to enhancing the quality of life and future opportunities for rural residents and their communities." Applications may be submitted at any time. Applications will be considered at the next Fund Review Committee until all funds are awarded. More details on the [Rural Feasibility Study Grant Program](#). For questions, contact Jody Bloemke via email at [jody.bloemke@agstar.com](mailto:jody.bloemke@agstar.com) or call 507-345-5656. <http://www.agstar.com>.

### **Grants Promote Environmental Conservation Programs**

#### [Wallace Genetic Foundation](#)

The Wallace Genetic Foundation provides grants to nonprofit organizations nationwide that believe in the long-term conservation of the soil and of the environment, rather than exploitation of natural resources for temporary profits. Specific areas of interest include: sustainable agriculture, protection of farmland near cities, plant genetic research, biodiversity protection, and environmental education and media. Requests may be submitted throughout the year. Application guidelines and forms are available on the Foundation's website.

### **Grants Enhance Comprehensive Capital Campaigns**

#### [Kresge Foundation: Capital Challenge Grant Program](#)

The Kresge Foundation supports communities in the United States and around the world by strengthening the nonprofit organizations that serve them. The Foundation's six major areas of interest are health, environment, arts and culture, education, human services, and community development. Through the Capital Challenge Grant Program, the Foundation supports nonprofit organizations that are engaged in comprehensive campaigns designed to support institutional growth through the construction of new facilities as well as the acquisition or renovation of existing facilities, the purchase of real property, and the purchase of major integrated equipment systems. Because environmental conservation is one of the Foundation's values, challenge grant applicants are encouraged to consider green construction issues. The Foundation accepts online letters of intent for this program throughout the year. Visit the website listed above to review the Capital Challenge Grant Program guidelines.

### **Fire Control Projects Supported Worldwide**

#### [FM Global Fire Prevention Grant Program](#)

The FM Global Fire Prevention Grant Program supports a wide array of fire prevention, preparedness, and control efforts throughout the U.S. and internationally. Funded projects include pre-fire planning for commercial, industrial, and institutional facilities; fire and arson prevention and investigation; and fire prevention education and training programs. Fire departments and brigades, as well as national, state,

regional, local, and community organizations are eligible to apply. Requests may be submitted at any time and are reviewed quarterly. Visit the website listed above to review the frequently asked questions and request a grant application.

### **Grants Target Rural Communities**

#### [Pioneer Hi-Bred International: Community Investment Program](#)

Pioneer Hi-Bred International's Community Investment Program supports efforts to improve the quality of life in the communities where the company's customers and employees live and work. The company focuses its grantmaking in the following areas: education, with an emphasis on science; agriculture; and farm safety. Priority is given to nonprofit organizations located in Pioneer facility communities or rural agricultural regions. Organizations with active Pioneer management/employee participation receive priority consideration. Requests may be submitted at any time and are reviewed quarterly. Visit the website listed above to learn more about the program; click on [U.S. Grant Guidelines](#) to access the grant application.

### **Support for Community Pedestrian Safety Groups**

#### [University of North Carolina Highway Safety Research Center Project](#) [http://www.walkinginfo.org/res\\_guide/index.cfm](http://www.walkinginfo.org/res_guide/index.cfm)

The University of North Carolina Highway Safety Research Center has been awarded a Cooperative Agreement from the National Highway Traffic Safety Administration (HSRC) to pilot test a new guidebook entitled, "A Resident's Guide for Creating Safe and Walkable Communities." HSRC is seeking up to ten communities or neighborhoods interested in making their environment safe for pedestrians and walkable to pilot test the Resident's Guide. Each selected site will receive \$2,000 for its participation, as well as technical assistance from pedestrian safety experts. Community make-up and size may vary, but the project and Resident's Guide are expected to be of most benefit to small neighborhood groups with limited geographical coverage. Requests are due by May 29, 2009. Visit the website listed above to submit an online proposal.

**The Bowerman Track Renovation Program**, administered by Nike's Corporate Responsibility Department, provides matching cash grants to community-based, youth-oriented organizations that seek to refurbish or construct running tracks anywhere in the world. Matching grants of up to \$50,000 are provided to nonprofit organizations, NGOs, government agencies, schools, and school districts. Requests are reviewed quarterly, and will be accepted on an ongoing basis through May 31, 2009. Application guidelines may be downloaded from:

[http://www.nikebiz.com/responsibility/community\\_programs/bowerman\\_track\\_program/](http://www.nikebiz.com/responsibility/community_programs/bowerman_track_program/)

### **Grants Address Native American Issues**

#### [Seventh Generation Fund for Indian Development](#)

The Seventh Generation Fund for Indian Development is dedicated to promoting and maintaining the uniqueness of Native peoples throughout the Americas. The Fund's primary grantmaking program areas include: Arts and Cultural Expression, Environmental Health and Justice, Human Rights, Sacred Earth, Sustainable Communities, Intergenerational Leadership, and Women's Leadership. Grants from \$500 to \$5,000 are provided three times per year to Native communities that address one or more of the Fund's program areas. The next application deadline is June 1, 2009. (Mini-grants of up to \$500 are reviewed throughout the year.) Application guidelines and a cover sheet form are available on the Fund's website.

### **Support for Youth Running Programs**

### [ING Run For Something Better](#)

ING Run For Something Better, in partnership with the National Association for Sport and Physical Education, seeks to increase physical activity in students and help fight childhood obesity nationwide through the creation of school-based running programs. The awards program will provide fifty \$2,000 grants to schools that want to establish a running program, or expand an existing program, that targets grades 5th through 8th in public elementary or middle schools. Schools should design a before, during, and/or after school program which will be offered to all students in the eligible grades. The program must have a commitment of at least 25 students in order to apply. The purpose of the school awards for running programs is to engage all students in the sport of running, not to fund existing athletic program and/or teams. Awards are available to schools in all 50 states, but will be limited to no more than five recipients per state. The application deadline is June 1, 2009. Visit the website listed above to download the application guidelines and forms.

### **Community Watershed Protection Projects Funded**

#### [RBC Blue Water Project: Community Action Grants](#)

The RBC Blue Water Project, an initiative of the Royal Bank of Canada (RBC), will provide \$50 million in grants through 2017 to support programs that foster a culture of water stewardship. The initiative's funding focus is Watershed Protection and Access to Safe Drinking Water. Launched in 2008, the RBC Blue Water Project Community Action Grants are provided to local grassroots organizations in Canada, the United States, and the Caribbean for projects devoted to informing, educating, and mobilizing people about watershed protection at the community level. Requests for grants ranging from \$1,000 to \$5,000 may be submitted throughout the year. Visit the Blue Water Project's website listed above for more information.

### **Matching Grants for National Forest Conservation Initiatives**

#### [National Forest Foundation: Matching Awards Program](#)

The National Forest Foundation (NFF) was established by Congress to support the USDA Forest Service in its management of America's National Forests and Grasslands. The Foundation's Matching Awards Program provides challenge cost-share grants to nonprofit organizations throughout the U.S. to engage in on-the-ground conservation and citizen-based monitoring initiatives directly benefiting National Forests and Grasslands. Priority is given to projects in the areas of community-based forestry, watershed health and restoration, wildlife habitat improvement, and recreation. All grants require at least a one-to-one cash match through non-federal donations. Pre-proposals are due by June 5, 2009. The request for pre-proposals may be downloaded from the NFF website listed above.

### **Funds for Elder Care Training Programs**

#### [Community College Caregiver Training Initiative](#)

The Community College Caregiver Training Initiative, administered by the International Longevity Center-USA with support from MetLife Foundation, provides grants to community colleges and other two-year institutions in order to address the critical need for elder caregiver training and of the central role that community colleges can play in providing this training. The purpose of the initiative is to encourage the development of new and novel programs to train both family caregivers and in-home care workers, promote skill development, advance the quality of care, and provide opportunities for career development. For the 2009 grant cycle, up to 15 grants of up to \$20,000 will be awarded. The application deadline is June 8, 2009. Visit the website listed above to download the Request for Proposals.

### **Drug Policy Reform Efforts Supported**

### [Drug Policy Alliance Advocacy Grants Program](#)

The Drug Policy Alliance is the nation's leading organization promoting policy alternatives to the drug war that are grounded in science, compassion, health, and human rights. The Drug Policy Alliance Advocacy Grants Program promotes drug policy reform at the local, state, and national levels by funding smaller, geographically limited, or single-issue projects. The program provides support through the following two components: Promoting Policy Change grants averaging \$15,000 to \$25,000 support nonprofit organizations working to advance drug policy through advocacy, grassroots organizing, and education, with emphasis on state-based activity. The application deadline is June 11, 2009. Rapid Response/Special Opportunities grants averaging \$10,000 to \$15,000 support time-sensitive strategic public education to block drug war initiatives or advance drug policy reform. Letters of intent are due on the first business day of the month throughout the year. Visit the website listed above for application guidelines for both grant programs.

### **Local Rock Climbing Projects Supported**

#### [Access Fund Climbing Preservation Grant Program](#)

The Access Fund Climbing Preservation Grant Program supports projects that enhance climbing opportunities and conserve the environment for climbing throughout the United States. Grants are generally made in the following categories: facilities/improvements, grassroots activism, land acquisitions funding, and education outreach. The Fund is most interested in making grants to organizations that work on local climbing access and conservation issues. Priority is also given to organizations that build a strong base of climber support and activism. Requests are reviewed three times per year; the next application deadline is June 15, 2009. Visit the website listed above to review the funding guidelines.

### **Seed Money for Wildlife Refuge Education Programs**

#### [National Fish and Wildlife Foundation: The Nature of Learning Grant Program](#)

*The Nature of Learning* Grant Program, an initiative of the National Fish and Wildlife Foundation, supports costs associated with implementing *The Nature of Learning*, a conservation education program that uses National Wildlife Refuges as outdoor classrooms in order to promote a greater understanding of local conservation issues. Start-up grants of up to \$10,000 will be awarded on a competitive basis to support the initial expenses of developing new programs. Second year follow-up grants of up to \$5,000 will be awarded to provide continued support to existing programs. Funded programs should involve a partnership among a local school or schools, community group (e.g., Refuge Support Group), and National Wildlife Refuge. Online applications must be submitted by June 15, 2009. Visit the website listed above to review the Request for Proposals.

### **Local Teen Programs Funded**

#### [Best Buy Children's Foundation: Community Grants Program](#)

The Best Buy Children's Foundation strengthens communities through the support of national, regional, and local grantmaking programs. The Foundation's Community Grants Program, led by employee committees in each of the company's eight territories across the United States, provides support to local nonprofit organizations that work to build social, academic, leadership, and/or life skills in early adolescents (primarily ages 13-18). Grant amounts average \$5,000 to \$7,000, and do not exceed \$10,000. Eligible organizations must be located within 50 miles of a Best Buy store or distribution center. Requests may be submitted between May 15 and June 15, 2009. Visit the Foundation's website to learn more about the program.

### **Financial Literacy Programs Funded**

### **[National Credit Union Foundation Innovation Grants](#)**

The mission of the National Credit Union Foundation is to promote and improve consumer financial independence by way of credit unions. Through Innovation Grants, the Foundation funds projects that will help low-wealth individuals and families reach life-changing goals in the following five areas: Financial Education, Transaction Services, Savings, Credit, and Homeownership. Credit unions as well as organizations that partner with credit unions are eligible to apply. Projects should leverage funding from other sources, have a plan for sustainability, and demonstrate potential to be replicated by other credit unions. Applications are due by June 30, 2009. Detailed application guidelines are available on the Foundation's website.

### **Violence Prevention Programs for Youth Funded**

#### **[United Methodist Church: A Brighter Future for Children and Youth](#)**

A Brighter Future for Children and Youth, an initiative of the United Methodist Church, supports nonprofit organizations that address the needs of children and young people age 5 to 18 in the areas of violence prevention, anti-abuse, and relationship abuse. Grants of up to \$4,000 are provided to small-scale, community, and church-based programs. Priority is given to programs that have significant involvement of women and youth at the grassroots level. Funded programs should demonstrate the ability to raise additional funds from other sources. Grant requests must be submitted by July 1, 2009. Application guidelines and forms may be downloaded from the website listed above.

### **Grants Promote Local Health Collaborations**

#### **[Robert Wood Johnson Foundation: Local Funding Partnerships](#)**

Local Funding Partnerships (LFP), a collaborative program of the Robert Wood Johnson Foundation (RWJF) and local grantmakers, supports innovative, community-based projects throughout the United States. Through LFP, a local grantmaker proposes a funding partnership with RWJF to provide seed money for a new project that addresses the health or health care problems of people who are not reached by traditional health and social services or for whom existing services are insufficient. Projects are expected to create meaningful change by addressing health in the context of complex social factors that impede good health for society's most vulnerable people. Programs that address access to medical care – such as the start-up of community health centers, mobile vans, dental services, or school-based health centers – also are not likely to be competitive. LFP provides grants of \$200,000 to \$500,000 per project, which must be matched dollar for dollar by local grantmakers such as community foundations, family foundations, corporate funders, etc. Brief proposals are due July 7, 2009. Visit the website listed above for program details and online application information.

### **Support for Community Collaborations Promoting Pet Adoptions**

#### **[Maddie's Fund](#)**

The goal of Maddie's Fund is to help build a no-kill nation where all healthy and treatable shelter dogs and cats find loving new homes. Through the Fund's Community Collaborative Project Grants, support is provided to community-wide collaborations of adoption guarantee organizations, animal control and traditional shelters, and private practice veterinarians working together to provide adoptions for all their treatable shelter dogs and cats within ten years. In order to prepare communities to be eligible for a Community Collaborative Project Grant, Maddie's Fund also provides Starter Grants, which offer support for the development of the various components of community collaborations. Applications for these grants, as well as several other programs offered by the Fund, are accepted throughout the year. Details on each of the Fund's distinct grant programs are available on the website listed above.

### **Programs Serving Disabled Veterans Funded**

### [Disabled American Veterans Charitable Service Trust](#)

The Disabled American Veterans Charitable Service Trust supports nonprofit organizations located in the United States that provide long-term programs offering direct assistance to disabled veterans and their families. The Trust's grantmaking interests include ensuring quality health care for veterans, assistance to veterans suffering Post Traumatic Stress Disorder and substance abuse, programs that meet the special needs of veterans with specific disabilities such as amputation or blindness, and shelters for homeless veterans. Requests are reviewed quarterly; the remaining application deadlines for 2009 are July 20 and October 20. Eligibility information and application forms may be downloaded from the Trust's website listed above.

### **Grants Promote Cooperative Programs for Rural Seniors**

#### [Cooperative Development Foundation: Mutual Service Cooperative Fund](#)

The Mutual Service Cooperative Fund, administered by the Cooperative Development Foundation, focuses on cooperative development programs that enhance the quality of life for seniors living in rural America. (For the definition of cooperatives, visit [www.ncba.coop/abcoop.cfm](http://www.ncba.coop/abcoop.cfm).) The Fund supports programs that contribute to the development of systemic approaches to replicate successful cooperative models that already serve seniors in rural areas, provide technical assistance to aid in the development of co-op ventures that will serve rural seniors, or provide a better understanding of lessons learned from co-ops that have served or are currently serving seniors living in rural areas. Any cooperative or cooperative-related organization, as well as other nonprofit organizations that address the Fund's priorities, may apply for a grant. The application deadline is July 24, 2009. Visit the Cooperative Development Foundation's website to download the application forms.

### **Support for Children's Health Services**

#### [American Academy of Pediatrics: Community Access to Child Health Program Planning Funds](#)

The Community Access to Child Health (CATCH) Program, a national program of the American Academy of Pediatrics (AAP), is designed to improve access to health care by supporting pediatricians and communities that are involved in community-based efforts for children. The CATCH Planning Funds program provides grants from \$2,500 to \$12,000 for pediatricians in the U.S. and its territories to develop community-based initiatives that increase children's access to medical homes or to specific health services not otherwise available. Planning project activities must lead to sustainable, community-based child health initiatives that increase access to care, especially for underserved children, and address health disparities among children. (Grants are also available for pediatric residents, but limited to a maximum of \$3,000.) The application deadline is July 31, 2009. Visit the AAP website to submit an online application.

### **Grants Address Rural Issues**

#### [CHS Foundation](#)

The CHS Foundation is committed to investing in the future of rural America, agriculture, and cooperative business through education and leadership development. The Foundation supports national efforts related to its mission as well as programs within the CHS trade territory for regional, multi-state, or statewide projects. The Foundation's funding focuses on the following program areas: Cooperative Education, Rural Youth and Leadership Development, Farm and Agricultural Safety, Returning Value to Rural Communities, and University Partnerships. All applications are accepted on an ongoing basis, with the exception of Cooperative Education applications, which are due September 30, annually. Visit the Foundation's website for a description of each grant category and online application instructions.

### **Early Child Care Programs Funded**

### [Rosie's For All Kids Foundation](#)

Rosie's For All Kids Foundation awards grants to nonprofit organizations dedicated to helping disadvantaged children and low-income families. The majority of the Foundation's grants are made through the Early Childhood Care and Education program. Priority is given to experienced, community-based programs serving children in low-income areas where many families struggle to find affordable, high-quality early education and care. Types of support include tuition subsidies; small renovations, supplies, and equipment upgrades; playground construction; and staff development opportunities. Grants typically range from \$5,000 to \$15,000. Letters of intent may be submitted throughout the year. Visit the website listed above to take the online eligibility quiz and submit an online application.

### **Small Grants Assist Domestic Violence Survivors**

#### [Allstate Foundation Education and Job Training Fund](#)

The Allstate Foundation Education and Job Training Fund, established by the Foundation in partnership with National Network to End Domestic Violence, provides small grants to survivors of domestic violence to help them achieve their educational and job related goals. Eligible expenses include books and tuition for school, job skills training, temporary child care, public transportation, etc. Any survivor of domestic violence is eligible to apply; however, the application must be completed by a local domestic violence program or coalition to be accepted. Applications may be submitted at any time. Details about the program are available on the National Network to End Domestic Violence website.

### **Water/Wastewater Funding Programs**

USDA Rural Development provides a number of community facility and water/wastewater funding programs for eligible applicants including public bodies, non-profits, and Indian Tribes in rural Minnesota. If you have a project in mind, we encourage you to file an application at your local USDA Rural Development office to begin the application process.

Roger Clapp - Area Specialist  
Baxter Office - 7118 Clearwater Road, Baxter, MN 56425  
218-829-5965, ext. 155  
[roger.clapp@mn.usda.gov](mailto:roger.clapp@mn.usda.gov)

Kathy Luepke - Area Specialist  
Bemidji Office - 3217 Bemidji Avenue North, Bemidji, MN 56601  
218-751-2689, ext. 152  
[kathy.luepke@mn.usda.gov](mailto:kathy.luepke@mn.usda.gov)

Rural Development has invested about \$418 million since 2001 through its Water/Environmental and Community Facility Programs to upgrade water, sewer, storm water systems and essential community facility projects throughout Minnesota. Rural Development accepts applications for these programs at any time and is asking all rural communities, non-profits and Indian Tribes with potential projects to get in touch with their local Rural Development office for more information.

For further information on these funding programs, please visit the Minnesota Rural Development web site at [www.rurdev.usda.gov/mn](http://www.rurdev.usda.gov/mn). Once you are at the web site, click on the community programs banner for information on water/wastewater or community facilities programs. You can also learn about opportunities for housing and business programs at this site.

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## **Resources**

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## **Center for Rural Policy & Development**

This is a great website that you can go to see how your community or area compares to others around the state. Easy to use, comprehensive and have comparative data on over 100 indicators. [www.ruralmn.org](http://www.ruralmn.org) and click on "Atlas Online".

## **Small Towns, Big Ideas**

The School of Government at the University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill has just released a new publication, "Small Towns, Big Ideas: Case Studies in Small Town Community Economic Development" online at <http://www.sog.unc.edu/programs/cednc/stbi/>. The website includes a searchable database of case studies on small town community and economic development. This is a valuable resource for small town leaders across the country. Go to the website and check out this great resource!

## **Follow the Money**

Sometimes a story just warms your heart. There are people out there who understand what makes an economic stimulus work. Following is a great story that makes tracking the impact of the stimulus easy and a lot of fun.

BREWTON, AL (pop. 5,498)-- A small-town pharmacist intrigued by the government's economic stimulus plan decided to launch his own version with \$16,000 in \$2 bills, and area stores have already felt the impact.

Danny Cottrell gave each of his full-time employees \$700 and part-timers \$300. He asked them to donate 15 percent to charity and spend the rest locally, particularly downtown, where store owners say that business has been lean.

"I wanted to do something for my employees, let them know our business is not in jeopardy, and for the local merchants," said Danny Cottrell, owner of The Medical Center Pharmacy with its main store in Brewton and a second in Atmore. "This seemed like a good way to do it."

Cottrell said he paid his employees with \$2 bills so he and the rest of the Escambia County business community could see how the money circulates.

Before he explained the plan to his employees last week, Cottrell said, he couldn't resist creating a little suspense.

"Times are hard," he said, "and the downturn has hit us some. Employees start to worry if they will even have a job. So I called a meeting of the staff. One employee broke out in hives from the nerves. My partner, Tom Henderson, said he heard some employees talking about the meeting. They were scared to death."

Cottrell said he began the meeting as usual, encouraging workers to answer phones faster and serve customers better. Then he began passing out envelopes.

When workers saw the cash, some were so excited that they wept, he said.

Workers are keeping a log of the stores that they visit, more than 65 at last count. Some have stopped in at stores they never tried before.

From the Winn-Dixie to the Peebles department store, merchants said the \$2 bills have been noticed.

"I've had three customers this week come in and pay with \$2 bills," said Candy Smith, owner of a clothing boutique downtown.

"The \$2 bills make it easy to see where it's going, see how it turns over and generates tax revenue that helps our town and schools," said Sammy Weaver, whose store sells jewelry and clothing. "I plan to save up the bills that come in here and pay Danny (Cottrell) my bill with them."

Some of the \$2 bills have even circulated back to the pharmacy.

"It's not a huge amount of money," Cottrell said of his hometown stimulus package. "It would have a more noticeable impact if someone with more resources came up with a huge amount of money, but the times are tough."

Still, for the workers with the windfall, this is just more of their boss' big heart shining through, they said.

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*This newsletter is designed to share funding opportunities, resources, and conferences or training events of common interest for program participants and supporters of the Initiative Foundation. For more information about these and other training opportunities, contact (Dan Frank, [dfrank@ifound.org](mailto:dfrank@ifound.org)).*

*If you wish to be removed from this mailing list or if you have other names/e-mails to add please contact [Leah Posterick](#).*