



BEYOND THE BORDERS

Community Economic Development and Leadership Online Newsletter

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Building Communities

Practical Tools and Information

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*This newsletter is meant to share practical tools and information to assist you in your important role in community and economic development work. We welcome comments on current letters plus encourage your advice for future articles.
Kathy*

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Editorial – NDSU Extension Service Programs Make a Difference

Sometimes you just have to sit back and ask yourself: Is what I'm doing making a positive difference in people's lives? ("I" meaning the NDSU Extension Service as a whole.) The answer, I believe, is a resounding **yes!** You're probably saying that because I work for NDSU Extension, I'm probably a little biased, and, of course, you're right! I am biased, but I also see the impacts this group of dedicated professionals makes!

The NDSU Extension Service's purpose statement reads: "To create learning partnerships that help youth and adults enhance their lives and communities." As I read this, I think about the programming we do, not just in community economic and leadership development, but also the programs in families, youth and agriculture. What we do is education. Our goal is to "develop educational environments" so people are able to apply what they've learned to make life better.

We accomplish this goal through programs in the NDSU Extension Center for Community Vitality. Programs such as Horizons, Rural Leadership North Dakota, Building Communities through Arts and Heritage, Agritainment, the Institute for Business and Industry Development, value-added agriculture, disaster planning for small businesses and others. I've seen what communities can accomplish when they develop a plan for action and implement their strategies. Communities such as Watford City and Langdon.

On a personal level, I know what the 4-H and youth program has done for both of our daughters. They've learned many skills, but the most valuable skill they have taken from their 4-H experience is their ability to communicate. Both enjoy and excel in public speaking, which has helped them in numerous ways. Examples are job interviews, graduate school interviews, awards and leadership opportunities they would not have had if they were unable to speak in front of groups.

I'm amazed that many people use their NDSU Extension Service often, but don't understand the breath of its services because they may use only one part, such as 4-H or horticulture programs. The NDSU Extension Service is more than crops, cows and cooking. It's creating learning partnerships that help youth and adults enhance their lives and communities.

For more information on the NDSU Extension Service, check out our Web site at www.ag.ndsu.edu.

Sincerely,
Kathy Tweeten
NDSU Center for Community Vitality Director and
Community Economic Development Extension Specialist

Twenty-four Communities Accepted for Horizons Program

Source: Lynette Flage, NDSU Extension Specialist, Horizons Program Director

Twenty-four communities have been accepted to participate in the North Dakota State University Extension Service's next Horizons program, which starts in late November.

Horizons is an 18-month community leadership program to help rural North Dakota communities with fewer than 5,000 residents that are struggling with poverty, shrinking populations and dwindling resources. The St. Paul, Minn.-based Northwest Area Foundation awarded NDSU Extension a grant for the program.

Horizons believes that if small communities can strengthen their leadership systems, they may be able to reverse economic and population declines.

The 24 communities were among 50 eligible for the program. To be considered, communities were required to send at least five residents to one of the six Horizons showcases Extension staff held throughout the state in October. The showcases gave participants a taste of the program, provided them with leadership and poverty-reduction strategies, and connected them with people from other communities interested in working on the same issues.

A total of 320 people attended the showcases, an incredible turnout. People left feeling hopeful about their communities and the ways they could make a difference together.

Once communities are selected for the program, the next step is for them to work with NDSU Extension to organize study circles and a LeadershipPlenty program.

Study circles are community conversations. Groups of about 30 residents come together to discuss poverty and other community concerns. The groups develop possible solutions with help from facilitators.

LeadershipPlenty is a nine-unit program the Pew Partnership for Civic Change in Charlottesville, Va., developed. The program teaches people to become effective leaders by learning to build partnerships, manage conflict and work as a community to solve problems and create opportunities.

After completing those steps, NDSU Extension will work with the communities to tailor a Horizons program to meet their specific needs. The grant allows Extension to hire staff to help communities obtain the training, support and other resources they need to overcome issues such as out-migration of residents, particularly young people; a growing elderly population; low-paying jobs; and lack of funding to improve essential city services.

This Horizons program is the second phase of a partnership NDSU Extension and the Northwest Area Foundation formed in 2003. The foundation is a nonprofit organization working to overcome poverty in an eight-state region. During the first program, the foundation provided a grant to aid five North Dakota communities - Ashley, Beach, Ellendale, Mott and Regent - and Eureka, S.D.

As a result of the initial program, 27 communities throughout North Dakota are gaining moderate-income housing. Residents from communities in the program convinced the 2005 Legislature to pass a law allowing towns of fewer than 5,000 residents to form housing authorities and issue bonds to pay for moderate-income, as well as low-income, housing.

Other results from the program included a cell phone tower being erected near Ellendale, which improved the area's telecommunication service. Also, communities developed strategic plans for their futures, involved young people in community decision making, encouraged more people to become leaders and explored ways to help residents feel better about themselves and their communities.

Business Hotline from the North Dakota Department of Commerce

Have a business question? Call the business hotline at 866-4DAKOTA, or (866) 432-5682. For more information, go to www.growingnd.com/index.asp?Section=Detail&PageID=405.

Coaching for Community Change

Source: *Coaching for Community and Organizational Change* by Mary Emery, Ken Hubbell and Priscilla Salant

Coaching is not just for sports teams anymore. Personal life coaches work with individuals; executive coaches work with leaders in the private and public sector; and community coaches work with local leaders and social change organizations. Working with a coach is a strategy to set goals, take action, make better decisions and develop natural strengths. Community coaching is over the long term. A community coach is a guide who supports communities and organizations in identifying and achieving their goals. Coaches help build community capacity to create sustainable change for a more hopeful future.

Coaching has become very popular in the last couple of years. The authors of this paper brought together 28 people who were actively involved in coaching to pool what they know about coaching for community and organizational change. If you are interested in coaching and its effectiveness, you can see the full report at www.ncrcrd.iastate.edu/projects/coaching/coachreport.pdf.

Succession Planning for Manufacturers Workshop

The NDSU Extension Center for Community Vitality and the Northcountry Cooperative Development Fund are sponsoring a seminar on succession planning for manufacturers on Dec. 14, 2006, at the NDSU Research Extension Center north of Carrington. John Logue of the Ohio Employee Ownership Center at Kent State University will be the presenter. Logue is a nationally recognized expert on helping corporations sell stock to their employees as a way of keeping the business viable after the owner(s) retire.

The seminar will begin at 11 a.m. and conclude at 3 p.m. A \$10 registration fee covers breaks and lunch. Registration by Dec. 8 is required. Call (701) 328-9718 or e-mail Sandra.k.erickson@ndsu.edu for registration information.

Economic Impact of North Dakota's Essential Function Bond Housing Program

Source: F. Larry Leistriz and Jodi Burkhardt Bruns

As of mid-2006, Essential Function Bond housing projects were underway in 25 communities across North Dakota. The estimated construction cost for these projects was \$20.4 million, and they represent 170 new housing units. When combined with estimates of residents' spending in rural communities, the 230 people assumed to be retained in their communities as a result of the housing projects would result in just a little more than \$2 million in annual expenditures retained in these local economies.

Housing is an essential element of community infrastructure, and affordable housing frequently has been identified as a need in rural communities. In fact, the Essential Function Bond for housing became law because the residents of Ashley and Ellendale, N.D., did a strategic planning session for Horizons and found housing to be a major need in their communities. Further study will be done on the economic and socio-cultural impacts of the housing program. Phase one reports are posted on this Web site at <http://www.ag.ndsu.edu/ccv/ced/publications/publistings.htm>

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