



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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NCRCRD WELCOMES NEW ADVISORY COMMITTEE MEMBERS

West Lafayette, Ind, January 31, 2025 – North Central Regional Center for Rural Development (NCRCRD) is pleased to announce the addition of three members to the Center’s Advisory Committee. The new members’ three-year appointment began January 15, 2025, and continues through December 31, 2028.

NCRCRD Director, Maria Marshall shared, “All of the new members bring exceptional experience and demonstrated commitment to rural development, which make them outstanding additions to our team. We look forward to their contributions as we continue to strengthen rural communities across the North Central Region.”

NCRCRD welcomes new Advisory Committee members:

- **Rial Carver**, Kansas State University – Rural Grocery Store Initiative Program Leader, K-State Research and Extension
- **Himar Hernandez**, Iowa State University– Community and Economic Development Extension, Assistant Program Director, Community Development Specialist
- **Corinne Valdivia**, University of Missouri– Doane Professor, Agricultural & Applied Economics; Development, Resources & Sustainability

They join current NCRCRD Advisory Committee members:

- **Zach Kennedy**, University of Illinois – Extension State Specialist, Community and Economic Development
- **Thomas Krumel**, North Dakota State University – Assistant Professor, Agribusiness and Applied Economics
- **Xinyi Qian**, University of Minnesota– Tourism Center Director & Extension State Specialist Tourism Center
- *4-H Program Leader Liaison:* **Tim Tanner**, South Dakota State University – Director of 4-H Programs
- *Community Development Program Leader Liaison:* **Dave Ivan**, Michigan State University – Director of Community, Food, and Environment Institute
- *FCS Program Leader Liaison:* **Pat Bebo**, The Ohio State University– Assistant Dean O&E Assistant Director FCS

NCRCRD’s nine-member Advisory Committee represents various backgrounds and expertise on rural issues and contribute to the Center’s regional impact and effectiveness. They play a crucial role in providing strategic guidance on NCRCRD’s programs and initiatives, reviewing grant proposals, identifying emerging rural development challenges and opportunities, and fostering connections between the Center and key rural stakeholders.

Openings on the Advisory Committee came available when two committee members completed their three-year terms in 2024. NCRCRD would like to thank former Advisory Committee members, **John P.**

Beck, Associate Professor, Michigan State University, and **Andrea Bjornestad**, Associate Professor & Extension Mental Health Specialist, South Dakota State University, for their outstanding contributions and service to the North Central Region.

For additional information on NCRCRD Advisory Committee please visit, <https://ncrcrd.ag.purdue.edu/who-we-are/board-of-directors/>.

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The North Central Regional Center for Rural (NCRCRD) is one of four Regional Rural Development Centers in the United States. NCRCRD's work links the research and educational outreach capacity of our region's 34 land-grant universities with our region's communities, local decision-makers, entrepreneurs, families, farmers, and ranchers to help address a wide range of development issues unique to our 12-state region. NCRCRD promotes regional collaboration by elevating the research and extension programs in our region; offering grant opportunities to support new and ongoing regional research, extension, and integrated activities; establishing a North Central Region dataset to encourage regional exploration; and creating networking opportunities through webinars, sponsorships, and making introductions between our partners. For more information, please visit <https://ncrcrd.org/>.

NCRCRD receives core funds from the U. S. Department of Agriculture's National Institute of Food and Agriculture (USDA NIFA) as well as from the North Central Regional Association of State Agricultural Experiment Station Directors (NCRA), North Central Cooperatives of Extension Association (NCCEA), and Purdue University, College of Agriculture.