

# FY 11 12 Awards

## Grant Archives

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## Keeping Your Equine Business a Vibrant Part of Rural Communities

October 11, 2011

**PI:** Anderson, K. (University of Nebraska)

**Co-PIs:** Auwerda, P. (Iowa State University), Heyboer, G., Skelly, C., and Waite, K. (Michigan State University), and Martinson, K. (University of Minnesota)

**Award:** \$11,436

**Project Abstract:** The equine industry is a vital part of agriculture at a national, state and rural community level. There are over 1 million horses and 162,000 horse farms in the North Central region (NCR) (USDA 2007 Census of Agriculture). Over 70% of horse owners live in rural communities of 50,000 or less. Most equine related businesses (training, breeding, boarding, etc.) are rurally located and support larger located spectator aspects of the industry. Michigan State University, University of Minnesota, University of Nebraska, and Iowa State University will develop a equine business education program targeted for the NCR, but applicable nationwide. Each state will host a simultaneous Extension conference focusing on liability, business finance, marketing, and insurance for equine business owners.

## Heritage Tourism for the North Central Region

October 11, 2011

**PI:** Avery, J. (Michigan State University)

**Co-PIs:** Dickerson, L. and Mefford, C.(University of Missouri)

**Award:** \$15,685

**Project Abstract:** Heritage tourism encompasses elements of living culture, history, and natural history of place that communities value and steward for the future. These elements are specific to a community or region and can contribute to stability, growth and economic development. The role of heritage and culture is especially critical in rural settings. This proposal describes a process for developing a peer-reviewed, comprehensive Heritage Tourism Process Curriculum and practice for the North Central Region to assist in developing and implementing heritage tourism community and economic development strategies. Opportunities for networking across the region will be enhanced with the development of an eXtension Community of Practice. Outreach and presentations will be conducted to reach and inform strategic partners for their own work. Once curriculum is completed, training will be offered through self-sustaining webinars to Extension faculty and key partners throughout the North Central Region.

## Helping Non-metro Communities and Underserved Entrepreneurs Grow Together

October 11, 2011

**PI:** Borich, T. (Iowa State University)

**Co-PI:** Mykerezzi, E. (University of Minnesota)

**Award:** \$16,500

**Project Abstract:** The immigrant population of nonmetro communities in the North Central region has grown rapidly in the past 25 years. Entrepreneurs within these communities appear to lack strong social and business ties to their new communities' traditional sources of business finance and business technical assistance and are thus termed underserved. Similarly, banks, nonprofit technical assistance providers, and other intermediaries may be unaware of the economic potential of these entrepreneurs or not understand how to reach them and serve them effectively. To address these barriers, we will prepare a white paper assessing, in at least four North Central states, the financing and technical assistance needs of underserved entrepreneurs and the barriers separating them from providers of these services. The assessment will use existing data and new information from surveys and roundtable discussions, and we will present its findings via webinar. Based on the assessment, we will prepare a proposal for major funding to develop, pilot, assess and revise, and ultimately implement new curricula for Extension agents to use in working with underserved entrepreneurs, financial institutions, and technical assistance providers in nonmetro communities. We will focus our initial assessment on Latino entrepreneurs. However, the additional funding will also support new curriculum development for other North Central communities of underserved entrepreneurs.

## Evaluating Impacts of Community Leadership Programs

October 11, 2011

**PI:** Emery, M. (South Dakota State University)

**Co-PIs:** Chazdon, S. (University of Minnesota) and Otto, D. (Iowa State University)

**Award:** \$19,473

**Project Abstract:** Investigate the link between community leadership programming and individual benefits to subsequent increases in community capacity, including economic development. Common definitions of community capacity include indicators related to: decision making, inclusion, communications, expanded economies, reduced distress in livelihoods, etc. We propose to take one step closer to identifying measures of impact on the community and to identify and develop appropriate program design that can contribute to increasing the impact of leadership development on community capacity.

We will primarily focus on assessing completed evaluations of leadership programs for communities and other institutions in the region along with bringing in cutting edge research on leadership development evaluation approaches including approaches used outside of the land-grant system. Our work will make an important contribution to the study of leadership and community. We will begin by: 1) Providing practitioners and program leaders with information on current evaluation strategies and suggesting strategies for measuring impact indicators, 2) Improving current leadership development programs with the addition of curriculum modules or strategies that intend to increase the impact of the program on the community, and 3) Taking the next step in designing research that increases our understanding of how these programs build community capacity.

## Poverty & Other Socioeconomic Distress in the North Central Region: Assessing Trends & Determinants

October 11, 2011

**PI:** Lobao, L. (The Ohio State University)

**Co-PIs:** Goe, R. (Kansas State University) and Partridge, M. (The Ohio State University)

**Award:** \$19,688

**Project Abstract:** The North Central Region has experienced a dramatic shift in the well-being of its communities and people over the last decade and particularly with the 2007-2009 recession. Poverty has been rising from the post-September 11th period. This trend diverges from the 1990s decade when poverty rates fell overall and especially in rural areas. While poverty across the North Central Region was studied in a previous NCRCD-sponsored project for the 1990s decade, little is known about distress in the 2000-2010 period. The project addresses the gap in research. Our research goals are to: (1) document the new patterns of poverty and related distress emerging in the 12-North Central state region over time and geographically; and (2) identify key determinants of these trends.

## Recreational Homes, Gateway Communities, and Rural Development

October 11, 2011

**PI:** Marcouiller, D. (University of Wisconsin)

**Co-PIs:** Deller, S., Green, G. Haverkamp, K., and Winkler, R. (University of Wisconsin), Erkkila, D. (NC Research and Outreach Center), Gartner, B., and Ziebarth, A. (University of Minnesota), Skidmore, M., and Vogt, C. (Michigan State University)

**Award:** \$10,518

**Project Abstract:** The use of recreational homes by absentee (non-local) owners creates both opportunities and pitfalls for rural community leaders, their citizenry, local business owners, and those concerned about land use and development planning. A multi-state team from Minnesota, Wisconsin, and Michigan will develop: 1) an applied research agenda focusing on the challenges and opportunities associated with recreational home ownership and supporting preliminary pilot research, 2) longer-term, large-scale applied research proposals for funding by federal agencies and/or foundations, and 3) a set of outreach materials to address rural development issues pertinent to the recreational home - gateway community phenomenon. While our work will focus on the Lake States of Minnesota, Michigan, and Wisconsin, our intent is to develop materials that can be transferable to other regions throughout the North Central United States and elsewhere experiencing analogous recreational home pressures.

## Asset Building in Rural Communities: Exploring Barriers and Identifying Opportunities

October 11, 2011

**PI:** Needles Fletcher, C., (Iowa State University)

**Co-PI:** Flage, L. (North Dakota State University), Olson, P. (University of Minnesota), Warning, J. (Iowa State University)

**Award:** \$18,708

**Project Abstract:** Community-based poverty reduction strategies are shifting focus from income and consumption to building assets among low-income households. Expanding opportunities for low-income families to save and invest for short- and long-term goals can lead to greater financial stability and can benefit local economies. However, much of the research and most demonstration projects on asset building have been conducted in metropolitan areas that have a much more extensive infrastructure of financial services and nonprofit organizations compared to the typical rural community. Iowa State University, the University of Minnesota and North Dakota State University have collaborated with the Northwest Area Foundation (NWAFF) to build the capacity of rural communities to reduce poverty through participation in the Horizons program. It has become clear that community-based approaches to asset building hold promise, but little is known about what strategies may be most useful to rural low-income households and also would be supported by the community. This proposal outlines a research program that will identify (1) assets that are perceived to be of greatest benefit to rural, low income households in building financial stability, (2) barriers faced by rural, low-income households in their attempts to build wealth, and (3) opportunities that could be shaped by collaborative efforts among low-income households, service providers, businesses, local government, rural philanthropists, and other community leaders to enhance asset building in rural communities.

## Incorporating Community Issues Management with Public Engagement and Community Decision Making

October 11, 2011

**PI:** Otto, D. (Iowa State University)

**Co-PIs:** Fulcher, C., and Leuci, M. (University of Missouri), Seeger, C. (Extension Specialist in Landscape Architecture), and VanWyngarden, D. (Iowa State University)

**Award:** \$20,000

**Project Abstract:** This project will investigate the effectiveness of using a web-based interactive GIS and community collaboration system to improve the engagement and decision-making process of several Iowa and Missouri community development projects. The proposed demonstration projects include developing local food systems, regional tourism development, and local government services sharing. Missouri's Community Information Management (CIM) system will be used to provide the interactive GIS framework. CIM is a web-based system designed for local and regional organizations to frame, manage and take action on complex issues. The foundation of this system is a process for framing issues through a wealth of GIS data, and mapping and reporting tools custom built for organizations to better understand how issues impact people and places. CIM can be employed as a tool within organizations and for community engagement in open, data-informed and collaborative decision making. Our major goal with this initiative is to demonstrate and document the effectiveness of this technology in a range of community development applications and the transferability of the technology to other states.