

Agreements for Fiscal Year 2000 National Centers of Excellence are Signed

Through a series of Cooperative and Memoranda of Agreements the number of institutions involved in the USDA National Centers of Excellence (NCE) Initiative was increased to ten. The two new schools are: San Diego State University-Imperial Valley Campus and California State University, Fresno.

Each participating school developed a one year work plan that outlined community and economic development projects and plans for outreach to be implemented over this Fiscal year.

The participating schools are geographically and culturally diverse. Four schools are classified as Hispanic Serving Institutions, four schools are designated as Tribal Colleges that serve American Indian students (as well as the communities in close proximity to the reservations), and one university is a Historically Black College. The list of participating institutions includes:

California State University-Fresno, CA
Cankdeska Cikana (Little-Hoop) Community College, ND
Crownpoint Institute of Technology, NM
Fort Peck Community College, MT
Heritage College: Toppenish, WA
Mississippi Valley State University: Itta Bena, MS
Nebraska Indian Community College, NE
Somerset Community College: Somerset, KY
San Diego State University-Imperial Valley Campus, CA
University of Texas Pan American: Edinburg, TX

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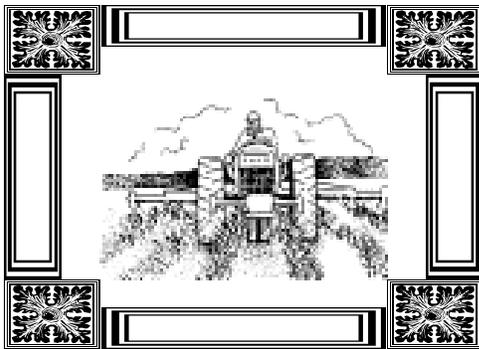
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News From The Schools

Heritage College

Small Farmer Training and Information Center Brain-storming Session

On October 14, Heritage College and Hispanic Growers' Director, Dr. Alfonso Garcia hosted a meeting attended by personnel from USDA's Bravo Program, Risk Management Agency, the Farm Service Agency, the Bureau of Indian Affairs, The Yakima Nation, Washington State University, and The Washington State Department of Community, Trade, and Economic Development. The goal of the meeting was to explore possibilities for the establishment of a program-activity to support the development of small and beginning farmers in the region.



Representatives of the agencies explained their program missions and all agreed that a collaborative group is needed to enlighten farmers and producers to the menu of available services, loan programs, and grant opportunities. Heritage College's new ventures office's, Heritage Enterprise Institute (HEI), role in this collaboration will be as information center and agency liaison for local small farmers. HEI will also facilitate partnerships for training and education programs and initiate technical assistance for entrepreneurial ventures. The primary beneficiaries of this collaboration will be Yakima Nation and Hispanic small farmers. However, through envisioned mentoring programs, the benefits will be disseminated to all farmers and producers in the area.

The University of Texas-Pan American

Leading for Empowerment Sessions a Big Success



Leadership training workshops are held in the Rio Grande Valley Empowerment Zone sub-zones four to six times a year. So far 122 individuals have completed the training. Participants learn about different aspects of leadership. The training manual consists of 10 modules:

- Learning about Leadership
 - Decision-making
 - Visioning
- Motivating People
 - Communicating
 - Team Building
- Resolving Conflicts
 - Solving Problems
 - Leading a Meeting
- Sustaining Involvement

Every participant receives a certificate of completion at the end of the workshops.

This is what the participants have to say about the workshops:

"I learned new ways of motivation and

community organizing."

"The part of this workshop I enjoyed the most was relating to people because of the exchange of ideas."

"I learned a lot about myself and what I should improve."

"I realized how much you can accomplish by working as a group."

"I gained awareness of the problems that we face and how to approach them."



"The part of this workshop I enjoyed the most was the visioning because we were able to see the problem at hand and the results down the road."

"It really made me think about my personal views and what concerns me about my community."

California State University, Fresno

Distance Learning Grant Secured

The National Center of Excellence at California State University, Fresno (CSUF) received funding, from the United States Department of Agriculture (USDA) Rural Utilities Service (RUS) Distance Learning and Telemedicine (DLT) Grant Program, for

the project Distance Learning via Internet Service Provider (ISP) Set Up, in City of Huron, a USDA "Enterprise Community." The project was designed to "bridge the digital divide" that exists between information rich and information poor communities. The goal behind the development of a locally owned ISP is twofold: economic development and educational opportunity.



First, the project will generate technical, "high-skilled" jobs needed for the ISP's operation and management. The project will also generate revenue from use of the ISP that will stay in the local economy instead of going to an outside vendor. Thus, the ISP will stimulate economic growth by encouraging residents to stay in their local community through the availability of skilled jobs and services commonly found only in metropolitan/urban hubs.

Second, by providing distance learning technology to an under-served rural community, educational opportunities can be offered to residents facing geographical and



economic barriers associated with physically attending regional colleges and universities. These educational institutions can target outreach and develop programming to address the needs

and resources of the rural community, i.e.

seasonal employment scheduling, rural economic development, and e-commerce. The existing distance learning programming at CSUF will be utilized, with other colleges and universities added during program development. This community-based ISP system will be one of the first owned and operated by an Enterprise Community.

San Diego State University - Imperial Valley Campus

Welcome to Our Newest Partner



San Diego State University (SDSU) - Imperial Valley Campus is the most recent addition to the USDA NCE Initiative. At SDSU - Imperial Valley Campus there is a proud history of community and economic development. The following excerpts are descriptions of two pre-existing programs at SDSU - Imperial Valley Campus they would like to share with you.

International Trade and Finance Association and The Global Economy Quarterly

The International Trade and Finance Association (IT&FA) is a professional organization devoted to the promotion of research in, and the study of, international trade, finance and global business issues. The IT&FA has over 300 members in 27 countries. The Imperial Valley Campus of San Diego State University is the official domicile of the IT&FA.

The International Trade and Finance Association puts on two conferences per year, the annual conference is in January of each year and is held in conjunction with the Allied Social Sciences Association. Secondly, the IT&FA international conference is held every June. In addition, the Association publishes the Proceedings from the June conferences, and signs book deals—three books from each international conference. The Global Economy Quarterly, an independent refereed journal, is the official publication of the IT&FA. These venues give faculty needed outlets to present and publish their research.

California Center for Border and Regional Economic Studies (CCBRES)

The California Center for Border and Regional Economic Studies (CCBRES) specializes in research and database development in two geographic areas: U.S.-Mexico trade relations and the Imperial Valley. CCBRES is in the process of developing and maintaining a current economic profile of the Imperial Valley. The data includes economic indicators such as demographic information, quality of life, labor and agricultural statistics, and macro

economic indicators. This data and information will assist the community with strategic planning.

CCBRES also hosts conferences and workshops on border issues, ranging from trade and economics to sociological and educational issues. Additionally, the Center collects and compiles statistics on trade between California and Mexico. The Center's goal is to become a national resource center for California-Mexico trade relations, as well as a resource for the local community on economic, demographic and socioeconomic indicators. All of the data collected by the Center is published in monthly bulletins and on the CCBRES web site (www.sci.sdsu.edu/ccbres/index.html).

Cankdeska Cikana (Little Hoop) Community College

Heavy Equipment Training

The historic flooding which has threatened the Devils Lake area of North Dakota including the Spirit Lake Nation, has created unprecedented opportunities for operators of heavy equipment used in road construction. Working with North Dakota's Governors Office on Workforce Training, Cankdeska



C i k a n a Community College has trained three classes, of 12 students each, in these career areas. This winter, plans

are to provide training for the truck drivers who haul materials on road projects. The college plans on making these regular programs serving students from all over North Dakota.

Commercial Garden Project

A Devils Lake physician, Dr. Richard Johnson, who was raised at Fort Totten, ND on the Spirit



Lake reservation, is providing ten acres of land to Cankdeska Cikana CC for a commercial garden project being developed with assistance from the North Dakota Experiment Station at Carrington, ND (a neighbor to

the reservation) and the ND Extension Service. Centering around the Science Department, at Cankdeska Cikana, the plan is to eventually provide vegetables for area schools, the casino, and other local public institutions.

Log Cabin Completion

The staff at Cankdeska Cikana is excited about the new log cabin being erected on the campus adjacent to the main highway which is frequently trafficked by tourists during the summer months. The Center of Excellence is involved with the Cankdeska Cikana business office in getting it ready for operations as a Museum/Tourism center next summer, and a bookstore that will be operational for the year 2000-2001 college year.



Maddock Technical Center

On July 2nd, 1999 the community of Maddock dedicated its new technology center. With 95% occupancy, it marks the successful completion of two years of cooperation between many entities in Rural Economic Assistance Program of North Central North Dakota. The Cankdeska Cikana Community College Center of Excellence provided technical assistance to the development.