

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Contact:

Allison Cross
Marketing & Communications Coordinator
The Center for Rural Development
P: 606-677-6019
across@centertech.com



2292 South Highway 27, Suite 300
Somerset, Kentucky 42501
Telephone: (606) 677-6000
Facsimile: (606) 677-6010
Web Site: www.centertech.com



Center for Rural Development and Brushy Fork Institute awards ARC Flex-E-Grants to Southern and Eastern Kentucky communities

SOMERSET, Ky.—The Center for Rural Development and the Brushy Fork Institute recently announced the recipients for the 2016 Appalachian Regional Commission Flex-E-Grants. The grants will help fund 20 different projects in southern and eastern Kentucky communities totaling \$175,000.

The Center for Rural Development and the Brushy Fork Institute worked together to choose projects that align with the goals of the Flex-E Grant Program and support other regional initiatives such as Shaping Our Appalachian Region and the Kentucky Promise Zone. The grants provide a critical resource for communities to plan and implement projects that address both local and regional development efforts.

The 2016 ARC Flex-E-Grants will fund 20 projects totaling \$175,000 in grant funds with a minimum of 20 percent matched locally. The grants were awarded in economically distressed counties, as designated by the ARC, including Clay, Estill, Harlan, Knott, Lawrence, Lee, Letcher, Magoffin, Martin, McCreary, Metcalfe, Perry, Rockcastle, Russell, Wayne, Whitley and Wolfe counties, plus a regional project that will impact a non-profit economic development agency that services 45 counties in Appalachian Kentucky.

The grants will support focus areas such as seven projects in Promise Zone counties: Clay, Harlan, Letcher, Perry and Whitley.

These southern and eastern Kentucky communities will use the grants to engage local residents in planning processes that explore strategic approaches to community and economic development, and projects that result in assets for tourism, downtown revitalization, youth development and other areas.

Grant funding amounts—and planned projects in each community—are as follows:

- **Stay in Clay —\$10,000** – Clay County will utilize funding to write and produce a historical outdoor drama to be used as a tool for connecting arts and heritage tourism efforts with Trail Town marketing initiatives.
- **Estill County 21st Century —\$10,000** - Estill County will utilize funding to provide an initial training event that will take place in buildings throughout downtown Irvine and hold strategic planning sessions which will aid in the development of plans to assist the organization to contribute to the overall community improvement.
- **City of Harlan Tourist and Convention Commission (Harlan County) —\$7,500** – Harlan will utilize funding to lay the groundwork for a co-op of artists and crafters in Harlan County to help improve and strengthen the community and to lend toward economic development efforts related to tourism and heritage development.
- **Pine Mountain Settlement School (Harlan County)—\$8,000** – Pine Mountain Settlement School will utilize funding to bring in a consultant to work with members of a newly formed strategic planning committee in creating a development plan for the school.
- **Hindman Settlement School (Knot County)—\$10,000** – Hindman Settlement School will utilize funding to undertake a strategic planning process for the Appalachian Scholars Program. The plan will focus on youth within the Promise Zone and USDA Strike Force region of Southeastern Kentucky.
- **City of Louisa (Lawrence County)—\$9,200** – Louisa will utilize funding to rehabilitate areas of the local Lockview Park which offers opportunities for community activities that will both improve social skills and physical health while serving the residents of Louisa, primarily the at-risk youth population.
- **Lee County Tourism Commission —\$7,000** - Lee County will utilize funding to develop a workable tourism strategic plan to serve as a guide for the local tourism commission.

- **Rt. 7 Artisan Fellowship (Letcher County)—\$10,000** – Rt. 7 Artisan Fellowship will utilize funding to establish an arts and craft trail along the 30-mile portion of Route 7 in an effort to build a local arts-based economy and establish the city of Blackey as an arts destination.
- **City of Salyersville (Magoffin County)—\$9,650** – Salyersville will utilize funding to engage youth and adults in the strategic use of emerging technology to support local tourism development initiatives.
- **Dream Institute (Martin County)—\$10,000** – Dream Institute of Leadership and Service Learning will utilize funding to organize local leaders, civic groups and volunteers to develop a strategic plan and feasibility study for the Dream Institute for Leadership and Service Learning in Inez.
- **McCreary County Fiscal Court —\$9,200** – McCreary County will utilize funding to recruit a business development consultant to provide an in depth analysis of existing tourism related businesses that are considered Trail Town Merchants.
- **Metcalfe County Cooperative Extension —\$5,650** – Metcalfe County will utilize funding to provide a summer enrichment educational opportunity for youth that will offer hands-on education in nutrition and build leadership, communication and relationship skills.
- **Perry County Fiscal Court—\$10,000** – Perry County will utilize funding to develop a comprehensive tourism marketing plan to guide Perry County's tourism development strategy over the next five years.
- **Southern Kentucky Economic Development Corporation (SKED) (Regional) \$10,000** – SKED will utilize funding to develop a strategic plan for Southern Kentucky Economic Development, a non-profit economic development group that serves 45 counties in Southeast Kentucky.
- **Rockcastle County Development Board—\$9,000** – Rockcastle County will utilize funding to support tourism development efforts through the creation of an educational museum exhibit about the pioneer movement.
- **Russell County Fiscal Court—\$5,000** – Russell County will utilize funding to enlist the services of a consultant to conduct educational community workshops about philanthropy in relation to the tax advantages of donations and the benefits of endowment building.
- **Russell County Industrial Authority (RCIDA)—\$10,000** RCIDA will utilize funding to assist their economic recovery efforts by providing the resources necessary to certify the

French Valley Business Park as a “Shovel Ready” site for the food and beverage industry.

- **Wayne County Fiscal Court —\$5,000** – Wayne County will utilize funding to enlist the services of a consultant to conduct educational community workshops about philanthropy in relation to the tax advantages of donations and the benefits of endowment building.
- **Whitley County Health Department—\$10,000** – Whitley County will utilize funding to equip residents with the skills and resources they need to effectively prevent and manage chronic disease.
- **Downtown Campton Renaissance Alliance (Wolfe County)—\$9,800** – Campton will utilize funding to construct a covered facility to serve as a picnic shelter and community gathering place within the Wolfe Lake Recreational Area.

The 2016 Flex-E-Grant cycle concludes on Sept. 30, 2016. Look for information on future FEG funding opportunities in the Fall of this year.

Established in 1996 through the vision of U.S. Congressman Harold "Hal" Rogers, (KY-05), and other leaders, The Center for Rural Development is a nonprofit organization fueled by a mission to provide leadership that stimulates innovative and sustainable economic development solutions and a better way of life in Southern and Eastern Kentucky. The Center provides innovative programs in leadership, public safety, technology, and arts and culture. The Center is committed to constantly expanding its capabilities in order to deliver a range of key services throughout Kentucky and the nation.