



# NCRPC NEWS

A publication of the North Central Regional Planning Commission

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www.ncrpc.org

## Youth Entrepreneurs Showcase Ideas

Young entrepreneurs in the region had the opportunity to develop a business concept and present their ideas to the public this spring.

The Clay County Economic Development Group sponsored its first Young Entrepreneur Fair in March. Clay County High School student Brendan Pfizenmaier's custom metal design business, BP Metal Art Designs, was awarded first place and received the People's Choice Award.

Lori Huber, Clay County Economic Development Executive Director, says the planning committee worked with a couple of teachers and began promoting the fair to students last fall. She also says community participation was a big part of the event's success.

"We held the fair during an already established retail event that had a lot of people attending," Huber says. "The audience really enjoyed the fair and was very supportive of it."

According to Huber, many students want to be part of the Clay County community as adults. Encouraging entrepreneurship at a young age is a good place to start.



**Top:** Brendan Pfizenmaier tells about his business, BP Metal Art Designs, during the Clay County Young Entrepreneur Fair March 17. His business was awarded first place and chosen for the People's Choice award.

**Right:** BP Metal Art Designs created this custom sign. The business currently uses Facebook to communicate with customers, although Brendan would like to create a website or online store.



Courtesy Photo

"The youth get to see that the adults are really supportive of their ideas and want to see them succeed," Huber says. "The adults get to see that the youth have some good ideas and want to build businesses that they can grow in the area."

Jewell County also offered an opportunity for its youth to showcase business plans. The fourth annual Jewell County Entrepreneurial Fair — or E-Fair — took place in April at Rock Hills High School. The event, which began in 2013, is put on each

(See Young Entrepreneurs, page 2)

## EXECUTIVE BOARD

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David Thurlow, Clay County

## ABOUT US

### Our Mission

Advancing rural Kansas through comprehensive planning and development services.

### Our Vision

By 2024, communities in rural Kansas will favor choices that embrace innovation, increase prosperity and demonstrate resilience.

### Contact Us

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### Visit Us on the Web

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# Public-Private Partnerships Benefit Rural Development

Today, partnerships are used in transportation projects, water and wastewater systems, delivery of social services, and a host of other purposes. An appropriate place for partner collaboration is in rural development.

Cities and counties are learning to apply the experiences with partnerships learned over the last few decades. Those experiences most successfully join together the strengths and resources of both the public and private sectors. Major refinements in the partnership process have resulted from these experiences.

Although partnerships can be challenging to execute, the rewards can be worth the extra effort. As the case studies included here indicate, in many instances public-private partnerships make possible the completion of projects that would be impossible using more traditional methods of community development.

There are many examples of successful public-private partnerships in North Central Kansas. For



Doug McKinney has been NCRPC Executive Director since 2008.

example, NCK Tech has worked extensively and effectively with Ditch Witch and local utility entities on the Underground Technology training program.

Likewise, the City of Haddam and Rev Honey

have worked together to make productive use of an old school. Salina Tech College has worked well with the likes of various health care facilities.

A grand example still in its infancy is the Bulk Solids Innovation Center located in Salina. The center is a result of the collaboration of Kansas State University, Coperion K-Tron Manufacturing, Vortex Valves, City of Salina, Salina Chamber of Commerce, Salina Economic Development Corporation, Saline County, U.S. Department of Commerce and North

Central Regional Planning Commission.

The NCRPC Executive Board recently visited the university managed Bulk Solids Innovation Center and learned that in addition to food ingredient manufacturers using the laboratory, there also have been makers of diaper absorbency components and producers of high-valued make-up. This public venue has a diverse set of clients seeking to solve a bevy of issues.

The importance of continued public sector encouragement and private sector leadership, as well as the public sector's on-going monitoring and nurturing of the partnership, is clearly evident. In this undertaking, as well as in most, it is equally important to have a clear and open process for the selection of any private partner(s).

Most important of all is that the private and public sectors build a collaborative relationship — one that requires “give and take” on both sides of the table to make the project a success for the long haul. ■

## Young Entrepreneurs

(Continued from page 1)

year as part of an initiative called Growing Jewell County through Entrepreneurship and Youth Attraction.

Jenny Russell, Jewell County Community Development Coordinator, says the event continues to be a success.

“The two winning projects this year are businesses the county could really support and ones it doesn't already have,” Russell says. “It's pretty neat that high school students have figured that out.”

There were 13 entries this year and several cash prizes were awarded.

“The two winning projects this year are businesses the county could really support and ones it doesn't already have. It's pretty neat that high school students have figured that out.”

— Jenny Russell  
Jewell County Community  
Development Coordinator

Because Clay County is a NetWork Kansas Entrepreneurship (E-) Community, Pfizenmaier also earned a chance to compete in the Kansas Entrepreneurship Challenge at Kansas State University April 25.

E-Communities can host local competitions and submit their event to be part of the Youth Entrepreneurship Challenge (YEC) series. The YEC series encourages students to develop a business concept and present their idea orally and in writing to teams of judges who evaluate the financial soundness, marketing savvy, and other aspects of the idea. Top youth from each of those competitions have the chance to compete at the statewide competition organized by the Kansas State University Center for the Advancement of Entrepreneurship in partnership with NetWork Kansas. ■

# CDBG Adds Special Activity Funding

A new “Special Activity” category of funding has been added to the Community Development Block Grant (CDBG) Annual Competitive Round for FY 2017.

A special activity application may include ONE of the following eligible activities: sidewalks; ball fields for recreational use only; playground equipment; open shelter houses; restrooms; or a parking lot for any one ball field, playground or shelter house. All the same CDBG rules

apply such as meeting a program objective (e.g. 51% LMI benefit) and contributing a local match of at least 25%. The regular CDBG Community Facilities category will also be funded as is customary each year.

Application deadlines for all CDBG FY 2017 funding categories are listed below in the Upcoming Events section. For additional information or to discuss your project planning needs, contact Emily, Nichole or Doug at the NCRPC. ■

## Capital Improvement Planning Training Held



Greg Vahrenberg of Piper Jaffray presents on community financial planning during the Capital Improvement Planning Workshop April 14 in Concordia.

Approximately 30 people took part in a workshop on Capital Improvement Planning for Local Governments April 14 in Concordia. The presenters were Greg Vahrenberg of Piper Jaffray and Beth Tatarko of the Austin Peters Group.

The workshop was sponsored in part by the Kansas Association of

Regional Development Organizations with support from USDA Rural Development.

The NCRPC has access to the templates provided at the workshop and can help facilitate a capital improvement plan with your local unit of government. For additional information, contact the NCRPC office. ■

## NEWS BRIEFS

### Peterson Named New Weatherization Director

NCRPC staff member Amanda Peterson was named Weatherization Director effective April 1.

Peterson directs operations of the Household Weatherization Assistance Program administered by the NCRPC. The program provides housing improvements that increase energy efficiency in income-eligible, single- or multi-family dwellings. The NCRPC Household Weatherization Program serves a 35-county area of North Central and Northwestern Kansas. Funding for the program

comes from the U.S. Department of Energy and the Low Income Energy Assistance Program.



Amanda Peterson

Peterson joined the NCRPC in 2014 after graduating from Tabor College with a bachelor’s degree in business management.

“Amanda is well-suited to this position and working in the professional engagement of contractors and clients as well as state officials,” Doug McKinney, NCRPC Executive Director, says.

Margaret Cathey was the previous Weatherization Director, serving for nine years in that position. Cathey began a phased retirement in Fall 2015. She continues with the NCRPC on a part-time basis as a Weatherization Assistant. ■

## UPCOMING EVENTS AND DEADLINES

**Thursday, May 26, 2016**

**Thursday, July 28, 2016**

NCRPC Executive Board Meetings  
Beloit Office, 2 p.m.

**FY 2017 CDBG Funding Deadlines**

Housing - Aug. 31, 2016

Water and Sewer - Sept. 30, 2016

Community Facilities - Nov. 1, 2016

Special Activity - Nov. 1, 2016

KAN STEP - Aug. 15, 2016 &  
Feb. 15, 2017

Commercial Rehab. - June 1, 2016

Economic Development - Open  
Window from Jan 1-Dec. 10, 2016



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## Executive Board Takes Field Trip to Saline County Locations

Executive Board members toured several locations in Saline County on April 28 during its annual field trip.

Doug McKinney, NCRPC Executive Director, says the field trip is an important tradition because it gives executive board members a chance to see and experience first hand the projects and undertakings of the NCRPC and see the diversity of the organization and its activities.

“It helps all of us realize — whether we’re involved in a large or small way — that there’s a benefit to what we all do in a collaborative fashion,” McKinney says.

The day began with a lunch at Blue Skye Brewery in downtown Salina. Representatives from Live Well Saline County and NCK Food & Farm Alliance discussed their initiatives.

The group then toured the [Kansas State University Bulk Solids Innovation Center](#). This research center is the only one of its kind in North America. The NCRPC was a facilitating partner in this endeavor.

The second stop was to Kansas State Polytechnic where board members saw an [Unmanned Aircraft System \(UAS\)](#) demonstration at the new UAS Flight Pavilion. It is one of the largest enclosed unmanned flight facilities in the nation.

The field trip concluded with a tour of [Vortex Valves](#), where the



John Lawrence (left), Research Director at Kansas State University Bulk Solids Innovation Center, and Todd Smith (second from left), General Manager of Coperion K-Tron, visit with the board at the Bulk Solids Innovation Center.

board heard from CEO Jeff Thompson. Vortex Valves is also a collaborative partner with the Bulk Solids Innovation Center. ■