

Central Nebraska Economic Development District

Serving 14 Central Nebraska Counties, including:
Blaine, Boyd, Brown, Cherry, Custer, Garfield, Greeley, Holt,
Keya Paha, Loup, Rock, Sherman, Valley and Wheeler



April 2015 –Newsletter

Hope and Vision for Our Communities

The message of hope and vision was strong and exciting, during the Central Nebraska Annual Conference, held March 27th in Stuart, Nebraska. The conference was well attended with 50 participants from the Central Nebraska region.

Milan Wall, Co-Director for the Heartland Center for Leadership and Development, shared findings that point to a trend for individuals and families who are moving back to rural communities, and oftentimes they are moving back without any effort on our part. He then asked conference participants, “so what would happen if we tried harder to attract them - wouldn’t that be great?”

Milan encouraged communities to “Reimagine Rural” by adopting on-the-map strategies that provide avenues and resources for potential newcomers to establish a personal connection to the community. He said communities should be asking themselves the following three questions: What are your strongest assets that are important to newcomers and young families? What career and business opportunities are available in your community? And, what challenges may be impeding your ability to attract newcomers and families to your community?



Yes, they’re out there and they’re interested!



Chuck Schroeder, Founding Director for the Rural Future Institute, was the luncheon speaker for the conference. Chuck reported that Great Plains research indicates that a majority of newcomers to Rural Nebraska communities are coming from metro areas, seeking a quality of life that rural communities offer. He challenged participants to change our perspective from “retaining youth” to “attracting youth” to our communities. He indicated that the most important outcome is Impacting Hope!!

Both Milan and Chuck agreed that today’s generation places great stock in “quality of life” when choosing a location to live, and they seek to live in a community that can provide that quality of life for themselves and their families first, even before securing employment.

The afternoon speakers were just as dynamic, sharing resources and programs that can help communities create those quality of life opportunities, including business, community, housing and educational endeavors. The speakers were from the City of Atkinson, the City of O’Neill, South Central Economic Development District, Northeast Nebraska Economic Development District, Rural Enterprise Assistance Program, Nebraska Department of Economic Development, USDA Rural Development, Nebraska Business Development Center, and Dundee Banking.

This annual conference was sponsored by the Central Nebraska Economic Development District, serving 14 counties in Central Nebraska including: Blaine, Boyd, Brown, Cherry, Custer, Garfield, Greeley, Holt, Keya Paha, Loup, Rock, Sherman, Valley and Wheeler.

To learn how the Central Nebraska Economic Development District can help make your community’s dreams come true, contact Judy Petersen at 402-340-0106, or email judy.petersen@cnedd.org

Our Mission

Improving Communities
Expanding Business
Enhancing Housing
Enriching Education

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